



# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: December 11, 2023

## POLLY ANN ICE CREAM

*Application No.:* LBR-2023-24-020  
*Business Name:* Polly Ann Ice Cream  
*Business Address:* 3138 Noriega St.  
*District:* District 4  
*Applicant:* Alex Viafara, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* November 7, 2023  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Joel Engardio  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Polly Ann Ice Cream is a premium ice cream parlor that has been in business since 1955. The business has been a community gathering space for multiple generations. They are known for their unique adaptations of international desserts into ice cream flavors such as brigadeiro, dulce de leche, ginger milk, and Turkish coffee.

The business was founded by husband and wife, Joseph A. Sicoacan and Marie M. Sicoacan (née Martin), at 3142 Noriega Street. In 1959, Bernice Lassiter (née Winsor) and Chuck Lassiter purchased the business. They introduced unusual ice cream flavors, which won ribbons at the state fair and made the business locally famous. Ted Hanson and Lee Hanson purchased the business in 1967. They served cones in the shape of little doggies and installed the big wheel of flavors, an iconic piece of Polly Ann's that still hangs on the wall.

Charlie Wu purchased the business in 1985, when there were 250 flavors offered. Charlie Wu was the first Asian student in the Cornell University food science program where he learned how to make ice cream. Through his expertise, the menu was expanded to 500 flavors, at a rotation of 50 flavors at a time. He introduced Asian flavors to the menu, including durian, red bean, black sesame, oolong tea, green tea, congee milk, black rabbit, lychee, and others.

The storefront closed from 2003 to 2005 when the original building was torn down and rebuilt. The business continued operating during the closure by supplying chocolate-covered bananas and ice bars to various grocery stores and markets.

Current owner, Alex Viafara, purchased the business in 2021 from Charlie Wu. Alex is a Colombian immigrant and had spent time in Brazil before living in the United States. He had always dreamed of opening an ice cream store and creating his own flavors.

### 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, Polly Ann Ice Cream has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

3142 Noriega St. from 1955 to 2003 (48 years)  
3138 Noriega St. from 2005 to Present (18 years)

**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, Polly Ann Ice Cream has contributed to the history and identity of the Outer Sunset 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 known for internationally inspired ice cream flavors, such as brigadeiro (a Brazilian dessert), dulce de leche, and Turkish coffee. They are also known for Asian ice cream flavors, such as durian and lychee.
- Polly Ann Ice Cream was featured in the 2021 documentary, "Try Harder!," and the 2001 television show, "Anthony Bourdain's a Cook's Tour," in the "French Laundry Experience" episode. The Western Neighborhoods Project and Eater San Francisco have also featured the business in their respective websites. Additionally, Polly Ann Ice Cream received a Certificate of Honor from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in recognition of their fiftieth anniversary.
- Polly Ann Ice Cream is an immigrant- and minority-owned business. The business supports local schools through fundraisers and donations.

## CRITERION 3

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

Yes, Polly Ann Ice Cream is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Polly Ann Ice Cream 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:

- Flavor wheel.
- Premium handmade ice cream
- Unique and international ice cream flavors.

## 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.

- Ice cream store.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Polly Ann Ice Cream currently located at 3138 Noriega St. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
Legacy Business Program

### Legacy Business Program

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# Small Business Commission

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

December 11, 2023

## POLLY ANN ICE CREAM

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*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### **Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Polly Ann Ice Cream, currently located at 3138 Noriega St.**

**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 Polly Ann Ice Cream 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 Polly Ann Ice Cream.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Flavor wheel.
- Premium handmade ice cream
- Unique and international ice cream flavors.

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

- Ice cream store.

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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 –

**Legacy Business Program**

Office of Small Business  
City Hall Room 140  
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# Legacy Business Registry

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2023-24-020  
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*District:* District 4  
*Applicant:* Alex Viafara, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* November 7, 2023  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Joel Engardio

**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

3142 Noriega St. from 1955 to 2003 (48 years)  
3138 Noriega St. from 2005 to Present (18 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:** November 8, 2023

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
Legacy Business Program

## Legacy Business Program

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Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 4



City and County of San Francisco

## JOEL P. ENGARDIO

November 7, 2023

Director Katy Tang (*via email Katy.Tang@sfgov.org*)  
San Francisco Office of Small Business  
City Hall, Room 110  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Nomination of Polly Ann Ice Cream to the Legacy Business Registry

Dear Director Tang,

I am pleased to nominate Polly Ann Ice Cream for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

Polly Ann has served the Outer Sunset district community, visitors, and tourists for generations. It is an ice cream parlor for all ages and frequented by multigenerational families, after-school students, and young adults.

Joseph A. Sicoan and his wife Marie first opened Polly Ann Ice Cream in July 1955 before selling the storefront to Bernice and Chuck Lassiter in 1959. The Lassiters helped Polly Ann secure publicity and local fame as a specialty ice cream maker in the Sunset. Their creative efforts paid off and Polly Ann's unusual flavors won ribbons at the State Fair.

In 1967, the Lassiters sold the ice cream parlor to Ted and Lee Hanson, who added some of the beloved twists Polly Ann's been known for over the years. They served cones in the shape of little doggies and installed a big peg wheel, which customers can spin to help them randomly choose an ice cream flavor.

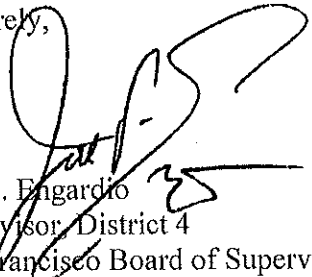
In 1985, Polly Ann was bought by Charlie Wu, the first Asian student to graduate from Cornell University's food science program. He brought his background and training in the science of ice cream to expand Polly Ann's collection of offerings to 500 flavors, all made on-site by staff. He helped introduce Asian flavors to the menu, including durian, red bean, black sesame, oolong tea, green tea, congee milk, black rabbit, and lychee, among others. After thirty-five plus years, Charlie decided to retire and sell Polly Ann to the next generation of ice cream aficionados.

In 2021, Alex Viafara became the newest owner to continue Polly Ann storied legacy. Alex is a Colombian immigrant and spent five years in Brazil before getting transferred to the United States for work. He always dreamed of opening his own specialty ice cream store, with flavors inspired by his time in Brazil and Columbia. When the opportunity materialized, Alex was thrilled to purchase the ice cream parlor and turn his dream into reality.

Today, Alex continues Polly Ann's role as a community anchor institution. His team employs local youth, high school students, and college students seeking professional development, on-the-job training, and mentorship. Many families grabbing ice cream will fondly tell Alex that Polly Ann gave them their first part-time job while growing up in the neighborhood.

I'm thrilled that Polly Ann Ice Cream continues to build on sixty-five plus years of history and experience making creative, quality ice creams in the Outer Sunset. I'm honored to nominate them for San Francisco's Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,



Joel P. Engardio  
Supervisor, District 4  
San Francisco Board of Supervisors



# Legacy Business Registry Application



## Business Information

**Business name:** Polly Ann Ice Cream

**Business owner name(s):** Alex Viafara

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

**Current business address:** 3138 Noriega Street, San Francisco, CA

**Telephone:** (415 ) 664 - 2472      **Email:** info@pollyann.com

**Mailing address (if different than above):**

**Website:** www.pollyann.com

**Facebook:** @pollyann.sf      **Twitter:** @pollyann.sf

**7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN):** 1 1 2 8 4 4 7

**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 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:** Alex Viafara

**Contact person title:** Owner

**Contact telephone:**      **Contact email:** info@pollyann.com



## 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:**

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

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

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**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:**

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## 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: Alex Viafara

Signature:



Date:

9/5/2023

# **POLLY ANN ICE CREAM**

## **Written Historical Narrative**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream have been serving the San Francisco community with premium ice cream handmade in the store, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere since 1955. Products also include milkshakes, ice cream cakes, cookies, and chocolate.

#### **b. Describe whom the business serves.**

Polly Ann Ice Cream is located in the Outer Sunset neighborhood and serves locals and tourists alike. It is an ice cream parlor for all the ages, from children to the elderly. The most frequent customers are students from the nearby schools and college, and also residents in the Sunset district. It is very common for families to visit the store together, sometimes several generations in a family group.

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

Unique ice cream flavors.

### **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.**

Polly Ann Ice Cream is a premium ice cream parlor that opened on July 16, 1955<sup>1</sup>. The shop was originally located at 3142 Noriega Street between 38th and 39th avenues, which was two retail spaces away from the 39th Avenue corner.<sup>2</sup>

Polly Ann Ice Cream closed on December 31, 2003, after which the original building was torn down. On February 28, 2005, it reopened in the new building at 3138 Noriega Street at the corner of 39th and Noriega.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Western Neighborhoods Project, [https://www.outsidelands.org/polly\\_ann\\_ice\\_cream.php](https://www.outsidelands.org/polly_ann_ice_cream.php)

<sup>2</sup> Sanborn Map, 1990s.

<sup>3</sup> Western Neighborhoods Project, [https://www.outsidelands.org/polly\\_ann\\_ice\\_cream.php](https://www.outsidelands.org/polly_ann_ice_cream.php)

The business was founded by Joseph A. Sicocan<sup>4</sup> and his wife Marie M. Sicocan (*née* Martin). Joseph and Marie lived at 1734 26th Avenue with their daughter Patricia Sicocan per the 1958 telephone directory.

The second owners of the store were Bernice Lassiter<sup>5</sup> (*née* Winsor<sup>6</sup>) and Chuck Lassiter, who bought the store in 1959. They helped make the store locally famous for its unusual flavors that won ribbons at the State Fair.

In 1967, the Lassiters sold the parlor to Ted Hanson and Lee Hanson who added some of the twists Polly Ann's has been known for over the years. They served cones in the shape of little doggies and installed the big wheel, which is still there, which customers can spin to help them choose a flavor.

Charlie Wu bought the Polly Ann Ice Cream in 1985. When he bought the store, it offered 250 ice cream flavors. It now has a collection of 500 flavors, all made by the Polly Ann staff. About 50 flavors are offered at any one time.<sup>7</sup> He introduced Asian flavors to the menu, including durian, red bean, black sesame, oolong tea, green tea, congee milk, black rabbit, lychee, and others. Charlie learned to make ice cream in the Cornell University food science program where many ice cream executives (including those from Ben & Jerry's and Baskin Robbins) learn the science of ice cream. Charlie was the first Asian student in the program.<sup>8</sup>

The current owner is Alex Viafara, who acquired Polly Ann Ice Cream in 2021. Alex is a Colombian immigrant who lived in Brazil for five years and was transferred from Brazil to the United States for work. He acquired Polly Ann Ice Cream during the COVID pandemic in 2021.

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

1955 to 1959:	Joseph A. Sicocan and Marie M. Sicocan
1959 to 1967:	Bernice Winsor/Lassiter and Chuck Lassiter
1967 to 1985:	Ted Hanson and Lee Hanson
1985 to 2001:	Charlie Wu
2021 to Present:	Alex Viafara

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream closed in 2003 when the original building was torn down, reopening in the new building in 2005. During its two-year hiatus from retail, the business survived by supplying

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<sup>4</sup> As listed in the 1957 and 1958 telephone directories.

<sup>5</sup> As listed in the 1964-1965 telephone directory.

<sup>6</sup> As listed in the 1960 telephone directory.

<sup>7</sup> Western Neighborhoods Project, [https://www.outsidelands.org/polly\\_ann\\_ice\\_cream.php](https://www.outsidelands.org/polly_ann_ice_cream.php)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

chocolate-covered bananas and ice bars (with distinctive flavors including taro, red bean, peach, mango, macapuno, and green bean) to Safeway, Albertson's, and small markets.

## **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.**

Polly Ann Ice Cream is a community gathering place for families to come together and enjoy ice cream, bringing together all generations in a lovely store to share a happy moment. The business always employs local neighbors, offering summer jobs for high school and college students.

Polly Ann Ice Cream is known for its delicious flavors including traditional flavors and variations, original flavors, and adaptations of international desserts. Some interesting flavors include the following:

- Black Sesame
- Brigadeiro (inspired by the Brazilian dessert)
- Bumpy Freeway
- Dulce de Leche
- Dutch Chocolate
- Durian
- Ginger Milk
- Green Tea
- Hazelnut Wafer Stick
- Lychee
- Mango
- Matcha Green Tea
- Merlot
- Red Bean (adzuki bean)
- Star Wars
- Taro
- Tiramisu
- Turkish Coffee

Polly Ann Ice Cream is also known for its big flavor wheel. “The big carnival wheel that can land anywhere from chocolate ripple to pistachio is well-known to adventurous ice cream lovers. If you can't decide which flavor ice cream you want, a spin of the wheel will decide for you.”<sup>9</sup>

Durian ice cream is sometimes on the flavor wheel and sometimes not, although it is always available. Because of its strong scent, Durian ice cream has its own freezer.

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream is involved with events in the neighborhood by making small donations to the fundraisers of the schools nearby.

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream has always employed local community members. It also hires college and high school students, offering training and being an excellent option for their first job. Polly Ann Ice Cream also makes donations to local schools for fundraisers annually.

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream has been referenced in the media, including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Try Harder!**  
2021  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-oZ1gQl60I>  
Polly Ann Ice Cream is shown in the documentary.
- **Anthony Bourdain A Cooks Tour: The French Laundry Experience**  
2001  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYjZpfr6JQ4>  
Anthony Bourdain visits Polly Ann Ice Cream and tries several “kooky” ice cream flavors.

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream received a Certificate of Honor from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 2005 in recognition of the business’ 50th anniversary.

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

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<sup>9</sup> Western Neighborhoods Project, [https://www.outsidelands.org/polly\\_ann\\_ice\\_cream.php](https://www.outsidelands.org/polly_ann_ice_cream.php)

Loss of a Community Gathering Place: The closure of Polly Ann Ice Cream would leave residents without a place to socialize, create memories, and connect with their neighbors.

Cultural and Culinary Loss: Its closure would result in the loss of a culinary experience that contributes to the cultural diversity of the neighborhood.

Employee Job Loss: The closure of Polly Ann Ice Cream would likely result in job losses for its employees. These individuals would need to seek new employment opportunities, which could be challenging, particularly since the business has been a significant employer of students in the area.

Customer Disappointment: Customers who have fond memories of Polly Ann Ice Cream for decades would lose a beloved place to enjoy ice cream and remember old days.

Community Impact: Loss of Polly Ann Ice Cream would have a broader impact on the community's identity and sense of place. It may lead to discussions about the changing character of the neighborhood and the importance of preserving its cultural heritage and traditions.

Economic Impact: Closure of the business could have economic ripple effects in the neighborhood. It may impact neighboring businesses that relied on foot traffic generated by Polly Ann Ice Cream customers.

Loss of History: Polly Ann Ice Cream is a historic and iconic business. Its closure would mean the loss of a piece of San Francisco's history and cultural fabric.

### **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?**

Polly Ann Ice Cream is located in a corner building with two columns next to the door, and large lateral windows.

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

Polly Ann Ice Cream is committed to maintaining handmade, premium ice cream with a wide variety of unique flavors. Spin the wheel!

**c. What challenges is the business facing today?**

Polly Ann Ice Cream, like many small businesses in the community, faces several significant challenges in today's business landscape. Two of the most pressing challenges are the high cost of rent and the escalating labor costs.

**High Rent Costs:** San Francisco has seen a significant increase in commercial real estate prices, making it increasingly difficult for small businesses like Polly Ann Ice Cream to afford the rent for their storefronts. As a long-standing establishment, they have witnessed the steady rise in rental expenses, which can put considerable strain on their financial resources.

**High Labor Costs:** Another substantial challenge is the rising labor costs. Ensuring fair wages for Polly Ann Ice Cream employees is essential, but it can be challenging to balance competitive compensation with the need to maintain affordability for Polly Ann customers. As labor costs continue to increase, it can impact the ability to hire and retain skilled staff while providing quality service.

These challenges are not unique to Polly Ann Ice Cream; they are shared by many small businesses in San Francisco. Addressing these challenges is vital to the sustainability and success of small businesses like Polly Ann Ice Cream. By alleviating the burden of high rent and high labor costs, programs can help ensure the continued presence of legacy businesses in our communities, preserving our cultural heritage and contributing to the vibrancy of our neighborhoods.

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**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.**

Ice cream store.

**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 3136-3138 Noriega Street is "B - Unknown / Age Eligible." It does not appear significant under Criterion C/3 (Architecture/Design)







POLLY ANN  
ice cream



- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 DUTCH CHOCOLATE                 | 13 Pineapple Hibiscus    |
| 2 Milk Chocolate                  | 14 Watermelon            |
| 3 CHOCOLATE CHIP                  | 15 HONEYDEW              |
| 4 Sunset Sundae                   | 16 Mango                 |
| 5 Marble Fudge                    | 17 Cherry Vanilla        |
| 6 BUMPY FREEWAY                   | 18 BLUEBERRY SHORT BREAD |
| 7 Mintie Oreo Cookie              | 19 STRAWBERRY MARBLE     |
| 8 MINT CHOCOLATE CHIP             | 20 STRAWBERRY            |
| 9 OREO COOKIE                     | 21 STRAWBERRY Sorbet     |
| 10 Kooky Dough Boy                | 22 Coconut               |
| 11 CHOCOLATE BROWNIE              | 23 Macapuno              |
| 12 Chocolate Toffee<br>Nut Crunch | 24 COCONUT & PINEAPPLE   |
| Lychee                            | Lemon OREO               |



- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 25 GREEN TEA          | 37 Tiramisu           |
| 26 MATCHA GREEN TEA   | 38 Caffe Latte        |
| 27 JASMINE TEA        | 39 Rainbow            |
| 28 Sesame             | 40 COFFEE & OREO BITS |
| 29 Black Tea          | 41 MochaAlmond        |
| 30 TARO               | 42 Tiramisu           |
| 31 Red Bean           | 43 KIWI Sorbet        |
| 32 Butter Pecan       | 44 Merlot             |
| 33 MILK TEA WITH BOBA | 45 Red Raspberry      |
| 34 Rum Raisin         | 46 STAR WARS          |
| 35 Vanilla            | 47 COTTON CANDY       |
| 36 GINGER MILK        | 48 Bubble Gum         |
| Peanut Butter         | DURIAN                |

EMPLOYEES MUST WASH HANDS BEFORE RETURNING TO WORK

**NOTICE**  
THIS AREA IS UNDER 24 HOUR VIDEO SURVEILLANCE



**CHOCOSA**  
*cup or cone*  
 waffle bowl (6.99)    sugar cone waffle (7.50)

**SCOOPS**  
 JUNIOR \$3.25    SINGLE \$4.25    DOUBLE \$6.25    MONSTER \$8.75

**SUNDAES**  
 mix & match ice cream, whipped cream, & 4 toppings of your choice  
 REGULAR \$7.95    MONSTER \$8.95

**BANANA SPLIT**  
 \$9.95

**MILK SHAKES**  
 REGULAR \$7.99    MONSTER \$9.99  
 add malt or banana +1.00

**FLOATS**  
 \$7.50

**TOPPINGS**  
 75¢ each  
 chocolate sprinkles, rainbow sprinkles, oreo crumbs, caramel sauce, chocolate sauce, butter crunch, fudge, peanut butter, chocolate shell, hot fudge, peanuts

**SOFT SERVE**  
 REGULAR \$2.75    LARGE \$4.00  
 JG served with whipped cream & sprinkles \$4.50

**HAND PACKED ice cream**  
 PINT \$8.99    QUART \$15.99

CREDIT MINIMUM \$5

96

Handwritten notes and notices on the left wall.





Polly Ann  
Artisan Chocolate  
Dark Chocolate  
Polly Ann  
Polly Ann  
Polly Ann  
Artisan Chocolate  
Mocha Almond

COOKIES

\*toffee nut\*

white  
chocolate  
MATCHA

CHOCOLATE  
CHIP  
cookies

peanut  
\*butter\*

mocha  
\*almond\*

butter  
\*peca







—SUNDAYS—  
REGULAR 2.00  
MILK MONSTER 8.00  
COOKIE 2.00  
BRUNNE 2.00  
SALTY BRICK 2.00

- STAR WARS
- BURRY FRIENDLY
- MILK MONSTER
- COFFEE LATTE
- PASTRY ALONG
- LYCÉE
- COFFEE BRICK
- THE SWEET



- TARO
- CHOCOLATE CHIP
- GREEN TEA
- Vanilla
- CHOCOLATE CHIP
- Fun Rainin
- Watermelon
- Butter Pecan
- Passion Fruit
- Mango



Western Neighborhoods Project is dedicated to the history of San Francisco's Richmond, Sunset, OMI and West of Twin Peaks districts. [read more ... \(/about.php\)](#)

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## Polly Ann Ice Cream Parlor

A Sunset District institution since 1955.

### Polly Ann Ice Cream Parlor

On Saturday, July 16, 2005 Polly Ann ice cream parlor celebrated its 50-year anniversary with a ribbon-cutting and all-day celebration. Single cones cost 99 cents all day at the Sunset district institution on the corner of Thirty-ninth avenue and Noriega streets. City Supervisor Fiona Ma was on hand for the ribbon cutting and to give owner Charlie Wu a proclamation from the mayor.

The first Polly Ann opened on July 16, 1955. In 1959, Bernice and Chuck Lassiter bought the store and owned it until the 1967. They helped make the store locally famous for its unusual flavors that won ribbons at the State Fair. The Lassiters sold the parlor to Ted and Lee Hanson who added some of the twists Polly Ann's has been known for over the years with Sunset District residents.

"They served cones in the shape of little doggies and put in the big wheel, which is still there, to help customers choose a flavor," Lassiter remembered.



(/Image/700/images/polly-ann-wheel.jpg)  
Polly Ann Wheel and Eric Wu -

The big carnival wheel that can land anywhere from chocolate ripple to pistachio is well-known to adventurous ice cream lovers. If you can't decide which flavor ice cream you want, a spin of the wheel will decide for you.

Charlie Wu has owned Polly Ann since 1985. He says that when he bought the store, it offered 250 ice cream flavors. It now has a collection of 500 flavors, all made by the Polly Ann staff. About 50 flavors are offered at any one time. At the 50th anniversary, people could order such exotics as lychee, sesame, lemon strawberry swirl, pink cloud, jasmine, sabra, coffeecheese[*cake*], and bumpy freeway (rocky road). The wheel behind the counter is that same one used many years ago.

Charlie Wu learned to make ice cream in the Cornell University food science program--where many ice cream executives (including those from Ben & Jerry's and Baskin Robbins) learn the science of ice cream. Charlie was the first Asian in the program.

Polly Ann closed in 2003 when the original building was torn down. During its two-year hiatus from the retail business, Polly Ann survived by supplying chocolate-covered bananas and ice bars (with distinctive flavors including taro, red bean, peach, mango, macapuno, and green bean) to Safeway, Albertson's, and small markets. On February 28, 2005, it reopened in the new building, at the corner of Thirty-ninth avenue and Noriega street.



(/Image/700//images/polly-ann-50th.jpg)  
Polly Ann 50th Anniversary -



(/Image/700//images/lassiters\_polly\_ann\_1959.jpg) Charles and Bernice Lassiter working at Polly Ann Ice Cream shop., 1959 -

Former owner Bernice Lassiter, who was on hand for the 50th anniversary, couldn't say who the original Polly Ann was, and admitted "I didn't know much about making ice cream when we started, but learned fast."

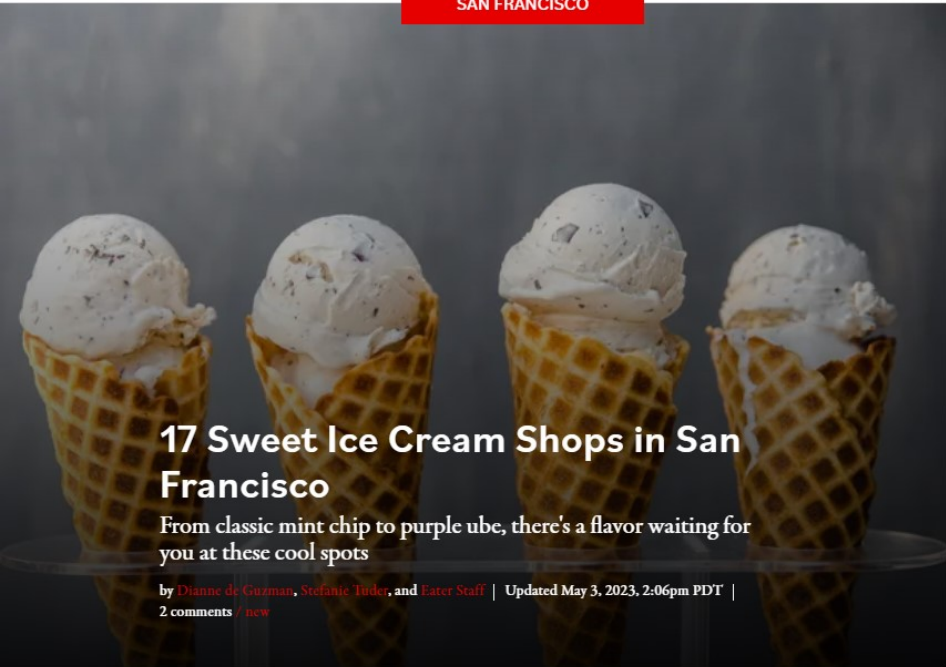


(/Image/700//images/bernice\_lassiter\_1959.jpg) *Bernice Lassiter working at Polly Ann Ice Cream., 1959 -*

Contribute your own stories (</cgi-bin/mboard/stories2/list.cgi>) about your neighborhood!

On the Map ([click marker for larger map](#))





## 17 Sweet Ice Cream Shops in San Francisco

From classic mint chip to purple ube, there's a flavor waiting for you at these cool spots

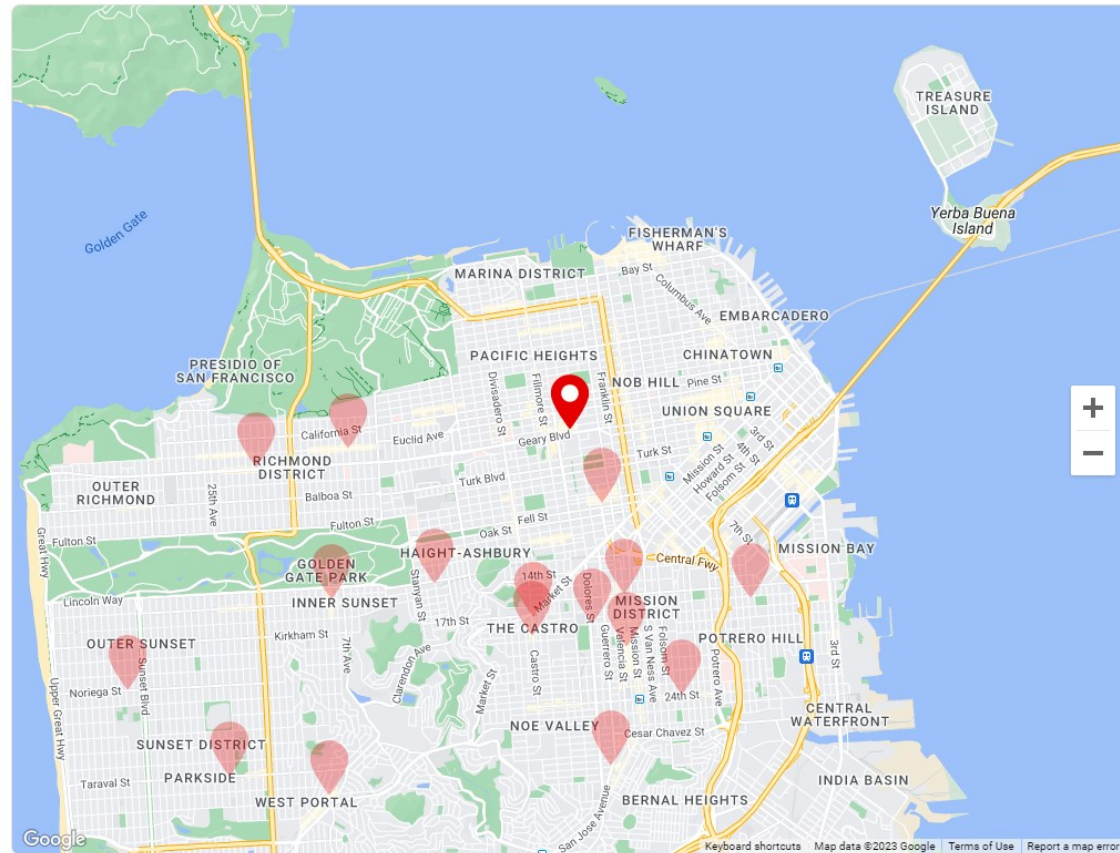
by [Dianne de Guzman](#), [Stefanie Tude](#), and [Eater Staff](#) | Updated May 3, 2023, 2:06pm PDT | [2 comments](#) [new](#)

Smitten Ice Cream | Audrey Ma

[f](#) [t](#) [s](#) SHARE

It may not always be ideal ice cream weather, but that's never stopped San Franciscans from snaking a line down the block for the sweet stuff, whether by the cone or frosty pint. You already know Bi-Rite and Humphry Slocombe are guaranteed to give you a good frozen fix, but there are also plenty of places with liquid nitrogen-frozen "fresh" ice cream, ice cream sandwiches made with doughnuts, unexpected flavors, and more. In a town that straddles the line between traditional and modern, there are options to reflect both those sensibilities with tried-and-true parlors and more updated spots. Here's a look at all of San Francisco's sweetest options for ice cream.

Eater maps are curated by editors and aim to reflect a diversity of neighborhoods, cuisines, and prices. [Learn more](#) about our editorial process.



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**Where to Eat and Drink in San Francisco's Chinatown**



**14 Romantic Restaurants for a Night Out in San Francisco**



**The 14 Restaurants in San Francisco Changing the Narrative for Gluten-Free Diners**

Show desktop

## Polly Ann Ice Cream

Have flavor fatigue? Leave your fate in the hands of Polly Ann, where you can spin the wheel and let it decide which of the more than 500 rotating flavors you'll be trying today. The shop, which has been open since the 1950s, often has Asian flavors like durian, lychee, and jasmine on display, as well as classics like rocky road and mint chocolate chip.

OPEN IN GOOGLE MAPS

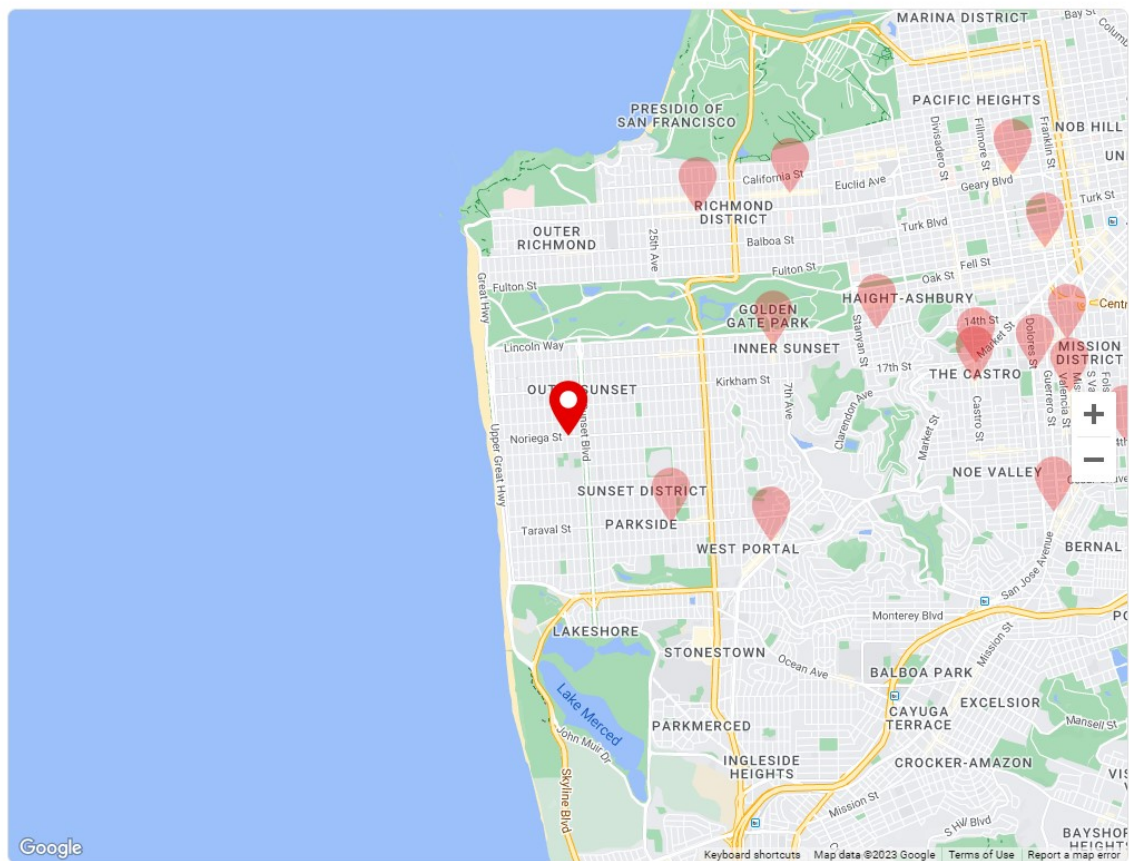
3138 Noriega St, San Francisco, CA 94122

(415) 664-2472

Visit Website



Yelp



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Where to Eat and Drink in San Francisco's Chinatown



14 Romantic Restaurants for a Night Out in San Francisco



The 14 Restaurants in San Francisco Changing the Narrative for Gluten-Free Diners

# POLLY ANN ICE CREAM VIDEO



Anthony Bourdain A Cooks Tour: The French Laundry Experience

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## Anthony Bourdain A Cooks Tour: The French Laundry Experience

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYjZpfr6JQ4>

Published on July 18, 2020

Posted by [GoTraveler](#)

Napa, CA - Marooned in San Francisco, Tony tastes local shellfish and durian ice cream before embarking on a pilgrimage to experience the genius of Thomas Keller, chef and owner of The French Laundry.

The #1 food writer and television presenter in the world, and star of Travel Channel and CNN, Anthony Bourdain reinvented the food travel genre. In his groundbreaking first television series, Bourdain travels around the world indulging his taste for local cuisine and eccentric characters. You never know what he'll say, who he will meet, or what they will have for dinner.

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#thebear #thomaskeller #frenchlaundry #bourdain #sanfrancisco

**Polly Ann Ice Cream is featured at 3:23. Following is a transcript:**

- 3:23 [Anthony] Next, I'm headed out to the Sunset where I've heard they're whipping up some pretty kooky ice creams.
- 3:28 [Anthony] Charlie, hi. Pleased to meet you.
- 3:31 [Anthony] Polly Ann's is well-known in San Francisco, particularly among the Asian community, for their unusual ice cream flavors. Pumpkin. Red bean, interesting. Taro.
- 3:44 [Charlie] You got the American beauty?
- 3:46 [Anthony] Oh, it's rose?
- 3:50 [Charlie] Too strong, huh?
- 3:51 [Anthony] Yeah.
- 3:52 [Charlie] Too strong.
- 3:52 [Anthony] Reminds me of kissing my grandmother.
- 3:55 [Charlie] (laughing)
- 3:57 [Anthony] Lychee, that's great. Some great flavors.
- 4:01 [Charlie] Thank you.
- 4:02 [Anthony] These are all very good, but not strange enough. Hmm. Then, I see it. Durian looks really interesting.
- 4:09 [Charlie] Durian, you want to taste that?
- 4:10 [Anthony] I think maybe a little cup of durian.
- 4:12 [Charlie] A cup?
- 4:12 [Anthony] Yeah.
- 4:13 [Charlie] Not a spoon?
- 4:14 [Anthony] No, I think I'll take a whole cup.
- 4:15 [Charlie] Okay. (Laughs)
- 4:17 [Anthony] Now I've had durian in Asia. It's a fruit with a smell so strong and offensive airlines prohibit bringing it on the plane. Try leaving cheese or a dead body out in the sun, and you're in the same neighborhood as the smell of durian.



- 4:30 [Anthony] This is durian ice cream, and it's the real thing, man. It's almost like a smoky camembert, avocado flavor. There's just nothing like it. I don't see Carvel's stocking this. One internal belch and you've pretty much destroyed the lives of innocent citizens around you.
- 4:49 [Anthony] Charlie, thank you very much.
- 4:51 [Charlie] Thank you.
- 4:51 [Anthony] It's wonderful. I'll be back. I have some chef friends coming into town. I think I'll bring them by for this.
- 4:56 [Charlie] Thanks (Laughing). Okay, bye.
- 4:58 [Anthony] I love the wackiness of Polly Ann's.

# Certificate of Honor

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
City and County of San Francisco

*The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby issues, and authorizes the execution of, this Certificate of Honor in appreciative public recognition of distinction and merit for outstanding service to a significant portion of the people of the City and County of San Francisco by:*

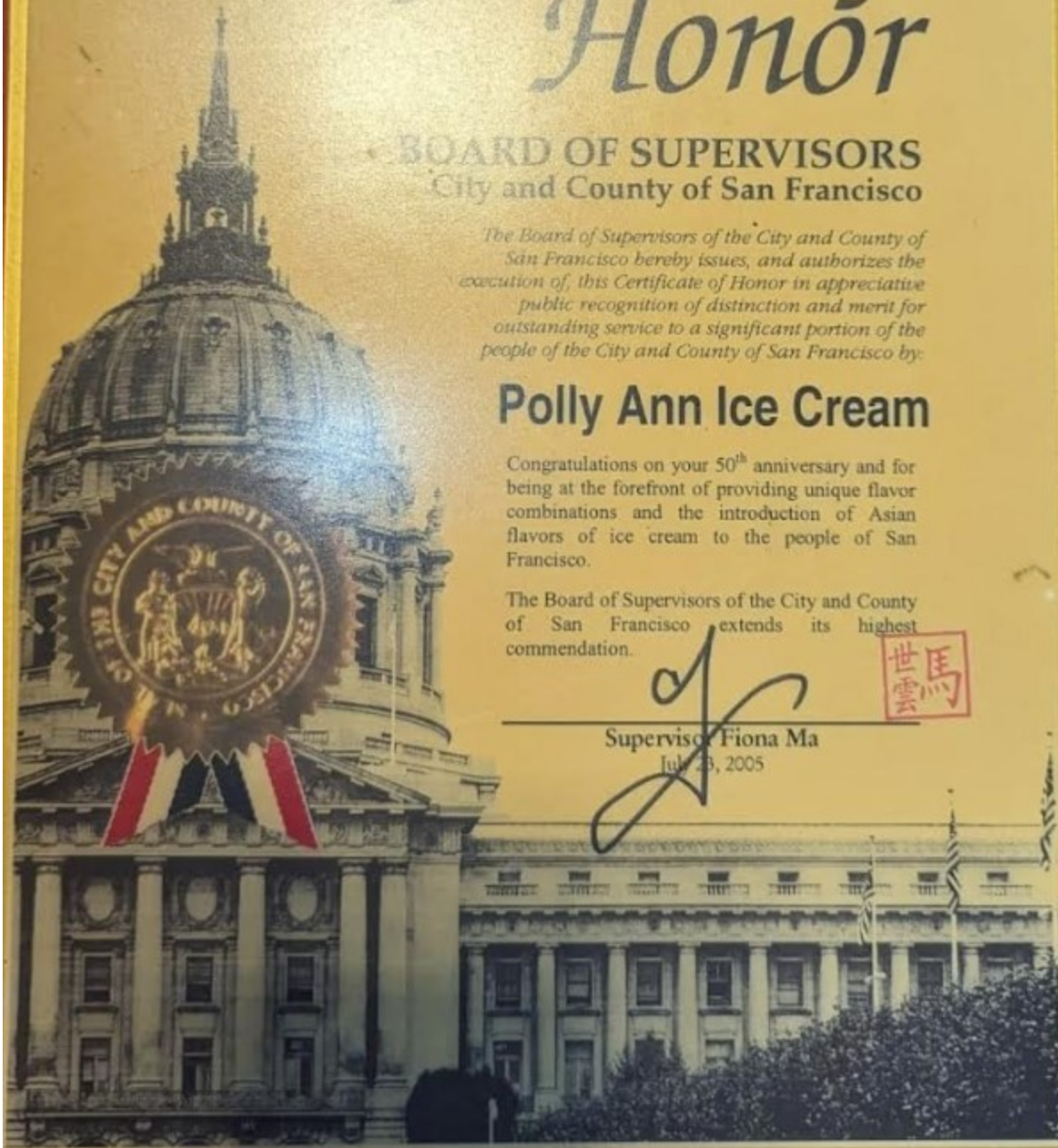
## Polly Ann Ice Cream

Congratulations on your 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and for being at the forefront of providing unique flavor combinations and the introduction of Asian flavors of ice cream to the people of San Francisco.

The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco extends its highest commendation.

Supervisor Fiona Ma

July 23, 2005





# LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**HEARING DATE: DECEMBER 6, 2023**

*Filing Date:* November 8, 2023  
*Case No.:* 2023-010588LBR  
*Business Name:* Polly Ann Ice Cream  
*Business Address:* 3138 Noriega Street  
*Zoning:* NC-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL, CLUSTER) Zoning District  
 40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Cultural District:* Sunset Chinese Cultural District  
*Block/Lot:* 2011/017  
*Applicant:* Alex Viafara  
 3138 Noriega Street  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Joel Engardio  
*Located In:* District 4  
*Staff Contact:* Maggie Dong - 628.652.7426  
 Maggie.Dong@sfgov.org

**Recommendation:** Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

## Business Description

Polly Ann Ice Cream is a premium ice cream parlor that has been in business since 1955. The business has been a community gathering space for multiple generations. They are known for their unique adaptations of international desserts into ice cream flavors such as brigadeiro, dulce de leche, ginger milk, and Turkish coffee.

The business was founded by husband and wife, Joseph A. Sicocan and Marie M. Sicocan (née Martin), at 3142 Noriega Street. In 1959, Bernice Lassiter (née Winsor) and Chuck Lassiter purchased the business. They introduced unusual ice cream flavors, which won ribbons at the state fair and made the business locally famous. Ted Hanson and Lee Hanson purchased the business in 1967. They served cones in the shape of little doggies and installed the big wheel of flavors, an iconic piece of Polly Ann’s that still hangs on the wall.

Charlie Wu purchased the business in 1985, when there were 250 flavors offered. Charlie Wu was the first Asian student in the Cornell University food science program where he learned how to make ice cream. Through his

expertise, the menu was expanded to 500 flavors, at a rotation of 50 flavors at a time. He introduced Asian flavors to the menu, including durian, red bean, black sesame, oolong tea, green tea, congee milk, black rabbit, lychee, and others. The storefront closed from 2003 to 2005 when the original building was torn down and rebuilt. The business continued operating during the closure by supplying chocolate-covered bananas and ice bars to various grocery stores and markets.

Current owner, Alex Viafara, purchased the business in 2021 from Charlie Wu. Alex is a Colombian immigrant and had spent time in Brazil before living in the United States. He had always dreamed of opening an ice cream store and creating his own flavors.

The business' primary location at 3138 Noriega Street is a Category B (Unknown / Age Eligible) structure on the northeast corner of Noriega Street and 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the Outer Sunset neighborhood. It is within the NC-1 Neighborhood Commercial, Cluster Zoning District, 40-X Height and Bulk District, and the Sunset Chinese Cultural District.

## Staff Analysis

### Review Criteria

**1. When was business founded?**

The business was founded in 1955.

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

Yes. Polly Ann Ice Cream qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Polly Ann Ice Cream has operated continuously in San Francisco for 68 years.
- b. Polly Ann Ice Cream has contributed to the history and identity of the Outer Sunset neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Polly Ann Ice Cream 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 known for internationally inspired ice cream flavors, such as brigadeiro (a Brazilian dessert), dulce de leche, and Turkish coffee. They are also known for Asian ice cream flavors, such as durian and lychee.

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

No.

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

No. The building was flagged as “Does not appear significant under Criterion C/3 (Architecture/Design)” in the 2015 Neighborhood Commercial Corridors Survey, however, this finding has not been adopted. The subject property is within an Active SF Survey area and will be surveyed and formally evaluated in 2024.

**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. Polly Ann Ice Cream was featured in the 2021 documentary, “Try Harder!,” and the 2001 television show, “Anthony Bourdain’s a Cook’s Tour,” in the “French Laundry Experience” episode. The Western Neighborhoods Project and Eater San Francisco have also featured the business in their respective websites. Additionally, Polly Ann Ice Cream received a Certificate of Honor from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in recognition of their fiftieth anniversary.

**Racial and Social Equity Analysis**

On July 15<sup>th</sup>, 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.

Polly Ann Ice Cream is an immigrant and minority-owned business. The business supports local schools through fundraisers and donations.

**Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business**

**Location(s) associated with the business:**

Current Locations:

- 3138 Noriega Street (2005 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 3142 Noriega Street (1955 – 2003)

**Recommended by Applicant**

- Flavor Wheel
- Premium Handmade Ice Cream
- Unique and International Ice Cream Flavors

**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 DRAFT RESOLUTION NO. ###

**HEARING DATE: DECEMBER 6, 2023**

*Case No.:* 2023-010588LBR  
*Business Name:* Polly Ann Ice Cream  
*Business Address:* 3138 Noriega Street  
*Zoning:* NC-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL, CLUSTER) Zoning District  
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 3138 Noriega Street  
*Nominated By:* Joel Engardio  
*Located In:* District 4  
*Staff Contact:* Maggie Dong - 628.652.7426  
 Maggie.Dong@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR POLLY ANN ICE CREAM CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 3138 NORIEGA STREET BLOCK/LOT 2011/017.

**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 December 6, 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 Polly Ann Ice Cream 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 Polly Ann Ice Cream.

*Locations*

Current Locations:

- 3138 Noriega Street (2005 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 3142 Noriega Street (1955 – 2003)

*Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business*

- Flavor Wheel
- Premium Handmade Ice Cream
- Unique and International Ice Cream Flavors

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 December 6, 2023.

Jonas P. Ionin  
*Commission Secretary*

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

RECUSE:

ADOPTED: December 6, 2023