



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: July 22, 2024

THE FLY TRAP

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-027
Business Name: The Fly Trap
Business Address: 606 Folsom St.
District: District 6
Applicant: Valen West, Owner
Nomination Date: February 7, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Matt Dorsey
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The Fly Trap is a full-service bar and restaurant that has served generations of locals and tourists for 141 years. The business was established by Louis Besozzi originally as “Louis’ Fashion Restaurant” at 22 Sansome Street in 1883.

Louis Besozzi arrived in San Francisco from Europe in the early 1880s and was a chef at Poodle Dog. He then started Louis’ Fashion restaurant. His restaurant became informally known as “The Fly Trap” due to the flypaper placed on the ceiling and under tables to control the insects that were teams of horses congregated and attracted flies. Navy officers stationed in San Francisco began to refer to the restaurant as the Fly Trap, and the name stuck much to the dismay of Louis.

Since 1883, the business changed locations and owners, but it has remained a staple of San Francisco restaurant history. Today, the restaurant is located at 606 Folsom St., and Valen West, longtime bar manager, is the sole owner.

The Fly Trap is one of the oldest restaurants in San Francisco. They strive to provide a comfortable and inviting space for all. In fact, according to the business, almost every day, customers visit the restaurant and tell stories of their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents dining at the restaurant. It is a true inter-generational business. In addition to their restaurant offerings, The Fly Trap gives back to their community. Recently, they donated to the Rocky Mountain Participation Nursery School and the Sausalito Yacht Club.

CRITERION 1

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

Yes, The Fly Trap has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

22 Sansome St. from 1883 to 1906 (23 years)
515 Golden Gate Ave. from 1906 to 1908 (2 years)
73 Sutter St. from 1909 to 1963 (54 years)
606 Folsom St. from 1963 to Present (61 years)

CRITERION 2

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

Legacy Business Program

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City Hall Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
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Yes, The Fly Trap has contributed to the history and identity of the Financial District 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:

- many notable people have dined at the business including professional football player and Hall of Famer Bob St. Clair, as well as Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor.
- The property in which the business is located is a contributory building under Article 11 of the Planning Code. Additionally, according to the Transit Center District Historic Resource Survey, the building appears eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The Fly Trap has been featured in several media sources including the San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco Examiner, and SFGATE.
- With regard to racial and social equity, The Fly Trap is a woman-owned business and has donated to the Sausalito Yacht Club and the Rocky Mountain Participation Nursery School.

CRITERION 3

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

Yes, The Fly Trap is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that The Fly Trap 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:

- Full-service bar and restaurant.
- Comfort meets California cuisine.

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.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include The Fly Trap currently located at 606 Folsom 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. _____

July 22, 2024

THE FLY TRAP

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legacybusiness@sfgov.org

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for The Fly Trap, currently located at 606 Folsom 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 July 22, 2024, 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 The Fly Trap 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 The Fly Trap.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Full-service bar and restaurant.
- Comfort meets California cuisine.

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

- Restaurant.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on July 22, 2024.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-027
Business Name: The Fly Trap
Business Address: 606 Folsom St.
District: District 6
Applicant: Valen West, Owner
Nomination Date: February 7, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Matt Dorsey

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?
 X Yes No

22 Sansome St. from 1883 to 1906 (23 years)
515 Golden Gate Ave. from 1906 to 1908 (2 years)
73 Sutter St. from 1909 to 1963 (54 years)
606 Folsom St. from 1963 to Present (61 years)

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

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

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: June 18, 2024

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

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City and County
of San Francisco



Board of Supervisors,
District 6

MATT DORSEY

麥德誠

February 5th, 2024

Director Katy Tang, *Via email* <Katy.Tang@sfgov.org>
San Francisco Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Director Tang,

FlyTrap Inc. is an esteemed establishment that has been an integral part of the San Francisco community for an impressive 140 years. Beyond being a full-service bar and restaurant, it stands as a testament to the rich history and vibrant culture of our community. Throughout the years, FlyTrap Inc. has provided a welcoming and safe environment for locals, traveling businesspeople, and vacationers alike.

The business has consistently demonstrated its commitment to the community by remaining open and serving everyone without prejudice based on factors such as race, sexual orientation, or religion. FlyTrap Inc. has been a vital success in San Francisco, especially in navigating the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Located in the same building constructed in the 1900s, FlyTrap Inc. holds the distinction of being one of the oldest restaurants in San Francisco, dating back to the late 1800s. Situated in the South of Market district, just a few blocks away from the Moscone Center and the Modern Museum of Art, the establishment earned its name over a century ago. The owner at that time would display food samples covered with flytraps due to the prevalence of horses and carriages on the streets at the turn of the century.

Preserving the legacy of FlyTrap Inc. is not just a matter of maintaining a business; it's about safeguarding a piece of San Francisco's history and culture. The community would undoubtedly be diminished if this cherished establishment were to be sold.

Thank you for considering this nomination. I believe that recognizing FlyTrap Inc. on the Legacy Business Registry would be a fitting tribute to its enduring contribution to the fabric of San Francisco.

Sincerely,

MATT DORSEY

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Dorsey".



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: The Fly Trap

Business owner name(s): Valen West

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

Current business address: 606 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94107

Telephone: (415) 243 – 0580 **Email:**

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: www.flytrapsf.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/p/The-Fly-Trap-SF-100063628420170/ **Twitter:** Instagram: @flytrapsf

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 4 3 1 1 4 8

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 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 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: Valen West

Contact person title: Owner

Contact telephone: (415) 243 – 0580 **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: 22 Sansome St. **Zip Code:** 94104

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

Dates at this location: From: 1883 **To:** 1906

Other address (if applicable): 515 Golden Gate Ave. **Zip Code:** 94102

Dates at this location: From: 1906 **To:** 1908

Other address (if applicable): 73 Sutter St. **Zip Code:** 94104

Dates at this location: From: 1909 **To:** 1963

Other address (if applicable): 606 Folsom St. **Zip Code:** 94107

Dates at this location: From: 1963 **To:** Present

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: ~~Valen West~~ Valen West

Signature: 

Date: 1/15/24

THE FLY TRAP

Written Historical Narrative

INTRODUCTION

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

Experience a slice of San Francisco's history at the Fly Trap, an iconic restaurant since 1883. Its distinctive moniker harks back to a time when horse-drawn carriages filled the streets, and the original owner creatively used fly traps to protect food displays. Today, the business is nestled in the vibrant Yerba Buena Garden District just a stone's throw from the Moscone Center and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The Fly Trap continues to celebrate San Francisco's rich heritage. Join them and be a part of their enduring legacy!

b. Describe whom the business serves.

The Fly Trap has served San Francisco as a local gathering place and has also attracted tourists visiting from around the world. The Moscone Center being a few blocks away is helpful on worldwide exposure as a long-standing restaurant in this great city of ours. The crowd ranges from the young and single to old couples who have frequented the business for decades.

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

A gastronomic landmark since the late 1800s.

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.

The Fly Trap was founded in 1883 by Louis Besozzi as "Louis' Fashion Restaurant" at 22 Sansome Street. Louis had arrived in San Francisco from Europe in the early 1880s and established himself as chef at Poodle Dog, where he developed a following. He established Louis' Fashion Restaurant soon after. Over time, his restaurant informally became known as "The Fly Trap."

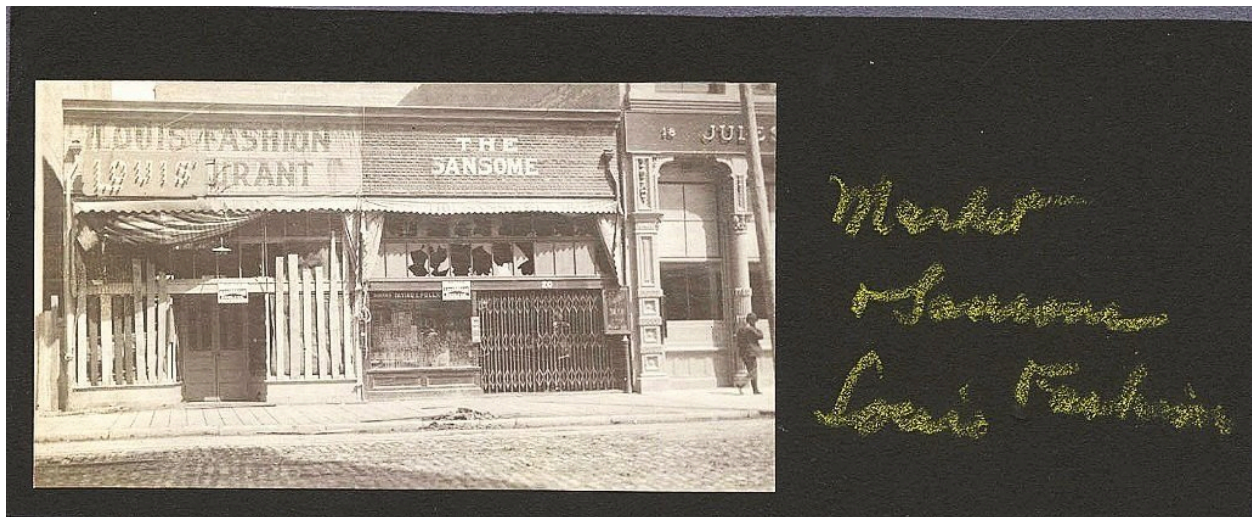
Per an article in 1926 in the San Francisco Examiner, Louis had created a long line of "Fashion" restaurants in San Francisco, which included the original "Fly Trap" restaurant.¹

An article in the San Francisco Chronicle on January 11, 1920, identified the original location of Louis' Fashion Restaurant as Sansome and Pine streets on the second floor of the building. On

¹ "Louis, 'Fly Trap' Chef, Is Dead," San Francisco Examiner, March 26, 1926

the ground floor was butcher John Y. Wilson. “Upstairs, over Wilson’s, was the original Louis’ Fashion Restaurant. The hordes of flies from the butcher shop below, all managed to find their way to the dining-rooms at meal hours. Thence originated the name of ‘The Fly Trap’ Louis indignantly repudiated the name of Fly Trap, reiterating, ‘This is ze Louis’ Fashion Restaurant!’”²

However, an article in the San Francisco Chronicle in 2016 pinpointed the restaurant’s original location as Sutter and Market streets (which is closer to its 22 Sansome Street address), where “teams of horses congregated and attracted flies. To control the insect invasion, the owner placed flypaper on the ceiling and under tables. Navy officers stationed in San Francisco began to refer to the restaurant as the Fly Trap, and the name stuck.”³ A historical picture of Louis’ Fashion Restaurant that appears to be labeled “Market & Sansome” shows the restaurant as a ground floor business, which seems to collaborate the 2016 article.



Five months before the April 1906 earthquake and fire, Louis returned to Italy on a visit and had to stay there due to ill health.⁴ The 22 Sansome Street building was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire, and Louis’ Fashion Restaurant last appears in the 1907 telephone directory, so it is safe to assume that the 22 Sansome Street location closed in 1906.

According to an article in the San Francisco Chronicle in 1920, other chefs, capitalizing on the “Fly Trap” name, opened “Fly Trap” restaurants throughout the city, much to the dismay of Louis despite him not liking the name.⁵ However, there were no “Fly Trap” restaurants in old telephone directories until one appears in 1915. And there is evidence that the Fly Trap Restaurant in the 1915 directory – which is clearly linked to today’s Fly Trap – opened as early as 1906 at 515 Golden Gate Avenue because a 1954 advertisement for the Fly Trap Restaurant indicated that the restaurant was 48 years old, meaning it was established in 1906.

² “John Y. Wilson, Butcher” San Francisco Chronicle, January 11, 1920

³ “Fly Trap creates a buzz with location, price and service,” by Michael Bauer, San Francisco Chronicle, October 26, 2016, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Fly-Trap-creates-a-buzz-with-location-price-and-10415336.php>

⁴ “Louis, ‘Fly Trap’ Chef, Is Dead,” San Francisco Examiner, March 26, 1926

⁵ “John Y. Wilson, Butcher” San Francisco Chronicle, January 11, 1920



Now that the noise has stopped, we can celebrate ...



COME IN AND MEET (left to right) "Babe" Tognoli, Ernie Calferata, Dominic Tollini—three men with an impressive background in the restaurant business, and the three men responsible for the popularity of The Fly Trap Restaurant.



IN KEEPING WITH the high standards of the Fly Trap Restaurant, mixed drinks are compounded of only the finest domestic and imported liquors, and deftly mixed just the way you like them.

our **48th** Anniversary

Tuesday and Wednesday
April 27th and April 28th

The Fly Trap Restaurant extends a cordial invitation to all the noise-weary of the Financial District. We celebrated the recent demise of Alfred, the piledriver "Monster"—now help us celebrate a quiet 48th anniversary. And to all San Franciscans and visitors to the city, we extend a hearty welcome to you too, and promise you a meal that has often been called "the best food in the world."

Orchids for the Ladies! A big piece of Birthday Cake for everyone!

PRIVATE DINING ROOMS AND BANQUET ROOMS.
Open every day for luncheon and dinner except Saturday.

The FLY TRAP Restaurant
73 SUTTER STREET DOUGLAS 2-9781

Congratulations and Best Wishes for Many More Successful Years:

<p>Lincoln Shrimp Company Wholesale Shellfish Dealers 171, 9-0198 171, 9-0198 708 Commercial St., S. F. 8</p>	<p>O'Brien, Spataro, Mitchell and Compagno Bros., Inc. Wholesale Florists 333 Clay St., S. F. 38</p>	<p>George F. Arata Company 537 Clay St. GRAYFIELD 1-8130 Purveyors of Fine Foods & Vices—Italian, French & Russian</p>
<p>A. Faladini, Inc. Wholesale Fish 842 Clay St., S. F. 38</p>	<p>P. G. Malinzi & Sons. 372 Columbus Ave., S. F. 11</p>	<p>Stanley Rosenthal & Co. 283 Ellis St., San Francisco 2, Calif. Wholesale Distributors Table Linens—Carpets Furniture—Decorative</p>
<p>Daily Menu Printing Co. A Complete Menu Service 82 Golden Street, S. F.</p>	<p>California Fuel Co. Wholesale & Retail Fuel Dealers 101 Kansas St., S. F. 9</p>	<p>Royal Baking Company 4779 Mission St. JEFFERSON 5-9655</p>
	<p>Boyle Fancy Meats 1332 Evans Ave., S. F. 24</p>	

Fly Trap 1954



Clipped By:
jamee_maree7
Thu, Jan 4, 2024

After Louis Besozzi's departure, Charles Besozzi became the owner the restaurant, presumably in 1906 under the new name "Fly Trap Restaurant" at 515 Golden Gate Avenue. It is uncertain how Charles was related to Louis.

The Fly Trap burned to the ground in 1908 from a fire that supposedly started in the restaurant's kitchen. The business reopened at 73 Sutter Street in 1909.

In the 1915 telephone directory, the Fly Trap Restaurant is listed with co-owners of Charles Besozzi and Domenico Tollini.

Per a San Francisco Examiner article on August 12, 1961, Ernie Cafferata joined the business on August 12, 1916. He was a chef and business partner, but it is unclear when he became a business partner. Based on telephone directories, it is assumed he became a co-owner sometime after the 1930s.

Historical restaurant menus from 1919, 1922, and 1923 show that there was a "Charlie's Fly Trap Restaurant" located at 452 Pine Street. Charles Besozzi is listed at the proprietor on the 1919 and 1922 menus. It is assumed this was a separate restaurant business with a similar "Fly Trap" name under the sole ownership of Charles Besozzi.

In 1926, restaurant founder Louis Besozzi was preparing to make a visit from Europe back to San Francisco when he died suddenly from the flu.⁶

The 1936 telephone directory lists the co-owners as Enrico Besozzi, L. A. Domonic, and Mario Tollini. The 1939 and 1940 telephone directories list the co-owners as E. A. Besozzi, Domenico Tollini, and Aug Mario.

In 1963, the business was evicted from 73 Sutter Street when the historic Wells Fargo building at Market and Montgomery streets, which housed the restaurant, was torn down to make way for a 25-story tower, the city's largest commercial structure at the time.⁷ On July 27, 1963, the Fly Trap closed its doors and was "completely disestablished" on July 31. Their equipment was auctioned off, including pots, pans, furniture, utensils, canned food, and artwork.⁸ The co-owners mentioned in the article were Charlie Bodio, Ernie Cafferata, and Domenico Tollini. It is unknown when Charles Besozzi had left the business or when Charlie Bodio joined the business.

The Fly Trap moved to the famed Planters Hotel located on 606 Folsom Street where it still lives today.

From 2003 through 2008, Irina Frolova was the owner of the Fly Trap per Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) records.

⁶ "Louis, 'Fly Trap' Chef, Is Dead," San Francisco Examiner, March 26, 1926

⁷ "Wells Fargo Plans 25-Story Building," San Francisco Examiner, September 21, 1962

⁸ "Auction at Fly Trap," San Francisco Examiner, August 1, 1963

In 2008, Hoss Zaré purchased the Fly Trap from Irina Frolova with three other co-owners – Mark Rennie, Hamad Khz, and Eli Mehrdad. They closed the restaurant for a few weeks to repaint the interior, at which time he also removed the piano.

On August 8, 2008, Hoss Zaré and his co-owners reopened the Fly Trap. Twenty years earlier, in 1988, Hoss was hired as a young, long-haired Iranian immigrant to be a dishwasher.⁹ Hoss grew up in Tabriz, Iran, came to the United States in 1986, and worked at the Fly Trap when he was a pre-med student at UC Davis. Cooking won out over medicine. In 2008, Hoss purchased the Fly Trap, and he slowly began to incorporate Persian accents into the menu.¹⁰

“I rescued an institution that was dying,” Hoss told the San Francisco Chronicle in 2016. “Coming back and taking a different direction with the food but keeping the history alive, I feel like ... I put another stamp on the city.”¹¹

In 2014, Valen West came on as a 20 percent owner. Valen had been the restaurant’s bar manager for years.

In 2016, Valen West bought out all the restaurant’s co-owners to become the sole owner of the Fly Trap.

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

1983 to 1906:	Louis Besozzi
1906 to 1915:	Charles Besozzi
1915 to Unknown:	Charles Besozzi; Domenico Tollini
As of 1930s and 1940s:	Enrico Besozzi; Domenico Tollini; Mario Tollini
As of July 1963:	Domenico Tollini; Ernie Cafferata; Charlie Bodio
Unknown to 2003:	Unknown
2003 to 2008:	Irina Frolova
2008 to 2014:	Hoss Zaré; Mark Rennie; Hamad Khz; Eli Mehrdad
2014 to 2016:	Hoss Zaré; Mark Rennie; Hamad Khz; Eli Mehrdad; Valen West
2016 to Present:	Valen West

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

The restaurant closed for one month during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

⁹ “Fly Trap creates a buzz with location, price and service,” by Michael Bauer, San Francisco Chronicle, October 26, 2016, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Fly-Trap-creates-a-buzz-with-location-price-and-10415336.php>

¹⁰ “Update: Zare brings inventiveness to an old Fly Trap,” by Michael Bauer, SFGATE, July 31, 2014, <https://www.sfgate.com/restaurants/article/Update-Zare-brings-inventiveness-to-an-old-Fly-5478626.php>

¹¹ “Hoss Zaré passes the Fly Trap to the next generation, looks to Iran,” by Tamara Palmer, San Francisco Chronicle, June 20, 2016, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Hoss-Zar-passes-the-Fly-Trap-to-the-next-8313181.php>

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.

The Fly Trap is one of the oldest restaurants in San Francisco and a staple of San Francisco restaurant history. The business offers a full-service dining experience for locals and tourists alike and has brought many memories to many people over the decades. The restaurant has always been a place of comfort with an inviting space where people feel safe and comfortable.

It is possible that the classic Louie's dressing was invented by the original owner Louis. This has been disputed, but no records can confirm or deny this.

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

All customers at the Fly Trap are significant. Some well-known customers have included professional football player and Hall of Famer Bob St. Clair, as well as Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

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

The Fly Trap donates to several organizations throughout the Bay Area.

Recently, the restaurant donated to the Sausalito Yacht Club, whose purpose is to actively promote the sport of boating, train people on how to sail, develop and sponsor yachting and yacht racing events, educate members about marine oriented skills, be actively involved in the community, and provide and manage a convivial bar and galley operation for the benefit of their membership.

The Fly Trap also recently donated to Rocky Mountain Participation Nursery School, a play-based, parent cooperative in the heart of San Francisco that has been helping children and parents thrive since 1948.

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

The Fly Trap has been referenced in the media many times over the years. Following are some older media references:

- "Fire Destroys Many Buildings," San Francisco Chronicle, August 3, 1908
- "John Y. Wilson, Butcher" San Francisco Chronicle, January 11, 1920
- "Restaurant Cited in Dry Law Gives Bond," San Francisco Examiner, May 27, 1922
- "Louis, "Fly Trap' Chef, Is Dead," San Francisco Examiner, March 26, 1926
- "Wells Fargo Plans 25-Story Building," San Francisco Examiner, September 21, 1962
- "Auction at Fly Trap," San Francisco Examiner, August 1, 1963

Following are recent media mentions:

- “Update: Zare brings inventiveness to an old Fly Trap,” by Michael Bauer, SFGATE, July 31, 2014, <https://www.sfgate.com/restaurants/article/Update-Zare-brings-inventiveness-to-an-old-Fly-5478626.php>
- “Hoss Zaré passes the Fly Trap to the next generation, looks to Iran,” by Tamara Palmer, San Francisco Chronicle, June 20, 2016, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Hoss-Zar-passes-the-Fly-Trap-to-the-next-8313181.php>
- “Fly Trap creates a buzz with location, price and service,” by Michael Bauer, San Francisco Chronicle, October 26, 2016, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Fly-Trap-creates-a-buzz-with-location-price-and-10415336.php>

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

Over its many years of operation, the Fly Trap has consistently been written up in local newspapers and from food critics. Some are included in the media mentions above.

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

If the Fly Trap were to close, many people would be sad. All of the memories that have been created in the space would be no more. Almost every day, customers tell stories that their parents, grandparents, and great grandparents used to tell them of their times spent there. The restaurant also provides many people employment over the many years of being open. When the COVID pandemic shut down San Francisco, the owner of the building mentioned that he “always wanted to turn it into offices anyway.” This is heartbreaking for this city and the history of the business.

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 Planters Hotel was designed by Salfield and Kohlberg and constructed in 1906. The building is a rare example of commercial and hotel architecture in the South of Market district built immediately after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Its wood frame construction and wood cladding is also rare as such construction was disallowed in the aftermath of the fires.

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

Comfort meets California cuisine.

c. What is the plan to keep the business open in the long term beyond the current ownership?

The current owner of the restaurant, Valen West, has been with the restaurant for many years and successfully guided the Fly Trap through the challenging COVID pandemic years. She has no plans to sell the restaurant or retire anytime soon. Ideally, the Fly Trap's chef, who has also been with the restaurant for many years, would be interested in someday continuing the Fly Trap's legacy. Valen and the chef used to work together at Moose's in North Beach.

d. What challenges is the business facing today?

With the mass exodus of downtown workers now working remotely after the COVID-19 pandemic, the area where the Fly Trap is located is a ghost town. The current state of San Francisco seems to be their biggest hurdle as they try to continue to keep their doors open. The rising costs of really everything has made keeping the restaurant open increasingly hard.

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.

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 that houses the Fly Trap is "A - Historic Resource Present." The building appears eligible for the National Register as an individual property through survey evaluation in 2012.





606
THE FLY TRAP

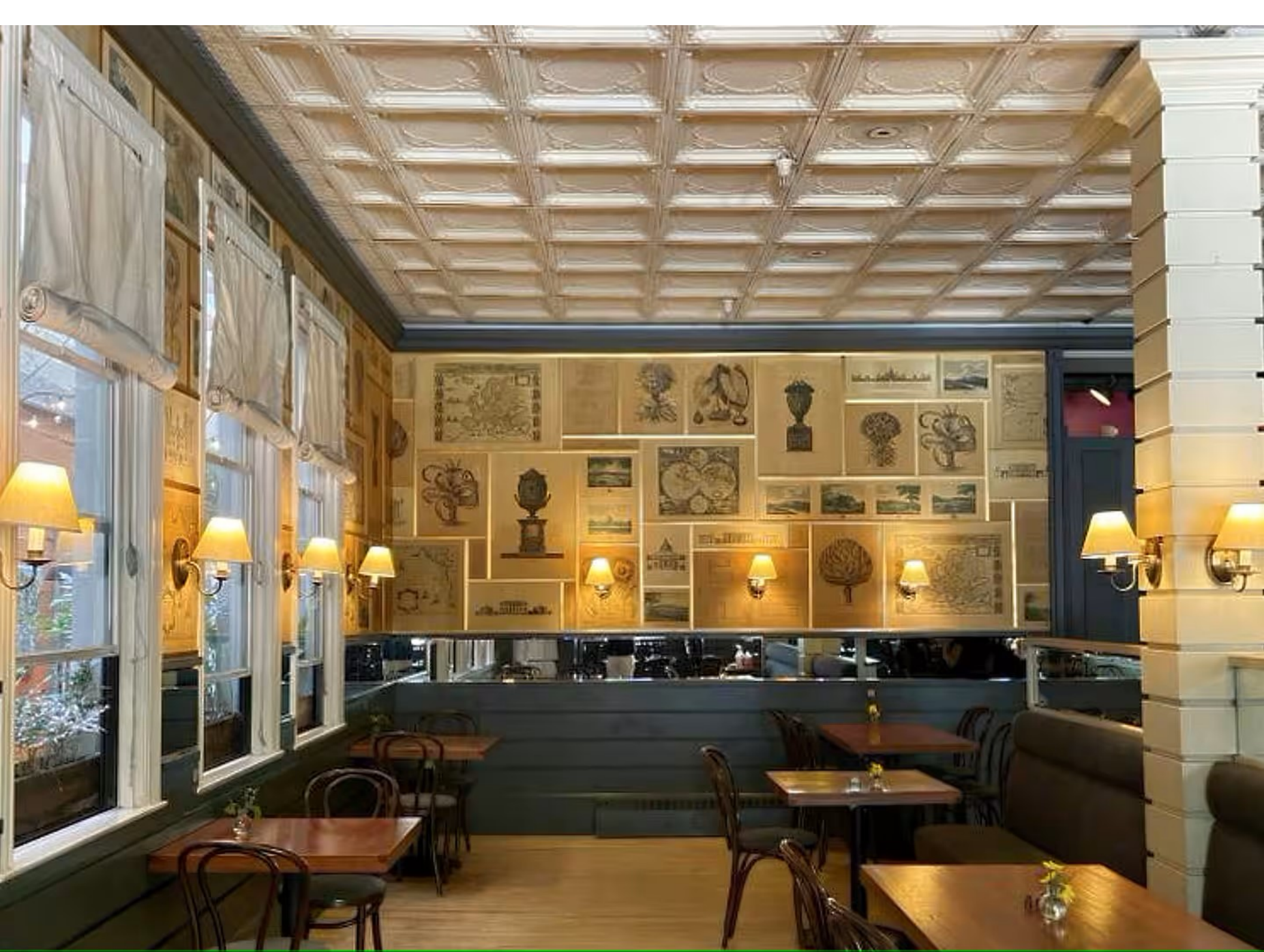
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<https://www.sfchronicle.com/restaurants/article/Hoss-Zar-passes-the-Fly-Trap-to-the-next-8313181.php>

SF Chronicle

[FOOD//RESTAURANTS](#)

Hoss Zaré passes the Fly Trap to the next generation, looks to Iran

By [Tamara Palmer](#), Freelance Writer Updated June 20, 2016 10:44 a.m.



Bar manager Valen West (left) sits at the bar with chef Hoss Zare (right) at Fly Trap on Friday, May 27, 2016 in San Francisco, Calif. Liz Hafalia/The Chronicle

Bay Area chef Hoss Zaré loves numbers and has found special significance in the number eight.

He reopened the Fly Trap on Aug. 8, 2008 (8/8/08). It was a meaningful moment for Zaré; 20 years earlier, in 1988, the historic San Francisco restaurant, which dates back to 1898, hired him — then a young, long-haired Iranian immigrant — to be a dishwasher.

And now, after eight years of pouring his heart and soul into the business — including suffering a heart attack in 2010 — and making it his own Persian culinary statement, Zaré, 54, has sold it.

“I rescued an institution that was dying,” he says of his time at the Fly Trap, the place where his American Dream started and flourished. “Coming back and taking a different direction with the food but keeping the history alive, I feel like after eight years, I put another stamp on the city.”



The Fly Trap 606 Folsom St.: Fall fattoush salad made with delicata squash, red quinoa, Brussels sprouts, pomegranate, mint, feta cheese, hazelnut and topped with a sumac dressing, starters such as kashk bademjan (roasted eggplant dip) and dinner entrees such as the abgoosht (lamb stew) are among the delectable Persian fare created here by chef/owner Hoss Zaré. (415) 243-0580, www.flytrapsf.com.
Stephanie Wright Hession/Special to The Chronicle



Owner/chef Hoss Zare shows trays of Latifeh (left) and Barbari (right), from Tabriz made at the Fly Trap kitchen on Thursday, May 26, 2016 in San Francisco, Calif.
Liz Hafalia/The Chronicle

He is selling the Fly Trap to Valen West, who has been the restaurant's bar manager for years and has been his business partner for the past two years. The name will remain, but the concept will slowly shift to something new. The restaurant will stay open through the transition, and the staff will remain, including chef Jose Hernandez, a onetime dishwasher who has worked under Zaré's wing since the restaurant opened. "I have given a young kid from El Salvador the chance to become a chef," he says. "And have proved that no matter where you are, if you have a dream, you can do it."

As for Zaré, his immediate plan is to take a few months off to recharge after years of relentless work. But one personality trait to know about Zaré is that he won't stay inactive for long. He'll be doing some pop-ups across the country and will then soon be full-steam ahead on his next culinary passion project: to introduce more of Iran's centuries-old cooking and baking traditions to the Bay Area.

The reconnection with his homeland has been a significant development. Last year, he returned to Iran for the first time since he left in the 1980s — and since his parents were brutally murdered there in 2007.



Bar manager Valen West behind the bar at Fly Trap on Thursday, May 26, 2016 in San Francisco, Calif. Liz Hafalia/The Chronicle

When he took over the Fly Trap the year after losing his parents, the restaurant's success was a therapeutic beacon during a dark, suffering time — one that he had to go through alone, with all his family on the other side of the world.

“At the time, I was trying to figure out why it happened, why this happened to me, my mom, my dad and my family,” he says. “All I felt was devastated. There is no therapy; nobody can help. You have to deal with it. You cannot forget about it. It's always going to be there. I found that memories of happiness were memories of when I'm being around the family, mom and dad, cooking and eating food. And I tried to share that with people. That's why I was leaning toward more homeland foods.”

That healing was reflected at the restaurant, where more Persian cooking began appearing.

“Seeing how people enjoyed it and how it brought up my childhood memories — that's how I started being happy again,” says Zaré.

Now, with the Fly Trap in new hands, Zaré plans to continue his pursuit of Persian food. He will go home to Iran for several months to learn from the best of the best: chefs, artisans and — perhaps most key — grandmas. Though he is still considering a few different ideas about how exactly he'll showcase his lessons, he hopes to announce a new San Francisco project by the end of the year.

Zaré brims with obvious pride when he shares that the restaurant's new owner is Valen West. "She is one of the most talented, professional, trustworthy employees and friends I have ever met," he gushes, adding how meaningful it is to him that he is able to entrust this strong woman with the next step in furthering the restaurant's 107-year-old legacy.

San Francisco has been Zaré's adopted home for years, but it wasn't until that heart attack six years ago that he fully realized how rich his life and community are here. "I lived to see my own mourning," he marvels. He has taken better physical care of himself in the years since. And now that he's able to go back to Iran and explore its cuisine, his heart is even more full and healed.

Tamara Palmer is a freelance writer in the Bay Area.

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[Tamara Palmer](#)

FREELANCE WRITER

Tamara Palmer is a freelance writer and professional DJ. She is the founder of Music Book Club, where she hosts author events and self-publishes books.

THE FLY TRAP VIDEO



The Fly Trap in San Francisco

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSORKgQn30E&t=67s>

Posted on July 6, 2020

Posted by [Yerba Buena SF](#)

History, the best cocktails, and the most delicious foods all combine in one restaurant in San Francisco. Hear more about their past and their presence from owner Valen West.



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: JULY 17, 2024

Filing Date: June 18, 2024
Case No.: 2024-005658LBR
Business Name: The Fly Trap
Business Address: 606 Folsom Street
Zoning: C-3-O(SD) (DOWNTOWN- OFFICE (SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT)) Zoning District
 320-I Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: SOMA Pilipinas Cultural District
Block/Lot: 3735/008
Applicant: Valen West
 606 Folsom Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Matt Dorsey
Located In: District 6
Staff Contact: Maggie Dong - 628.652.7426
 Maggie.Dong@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

The Fly Trap is a full-service bar and restaurant that has served generations of locals and tourists for 141 years. The business was established by Louis Besozzi originally as “Louis’ Fashion Restaurant” at 22 Sansome Street in 1883. Louis Besozzi arrived in San Francisco from Europe in the early 1880s and was a chef at Poodle Dog. He then started Louis’ Fashion restaurant. His restaurant became informally known as “The Fly Trap” due to the flypaper placed on the ceiling and under tables to control the insects that would go from the butcher shop on the first floor to the dining room on the second floor. Over the 141 years, the business changed location and owners, but has remained a staple of San Francisco restaurant history. Today, Valen West, longtime bar manager, is the sole owner.

Today, the Fly Trap is one of the oldest restaurants in San Francisco. They strive to provide a comfortable and inviting space for all. In fact, according to the business, almost every day, customers visit the restaurant and tell stories of their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents dining at the restaurant. It is a true inter-

generational business. In addition to their restaurant offerings, the Fly Trap gives back to their community. Recently, they donated to the Rocky Mountain Participation Nursery School and the Sausalito Yacht Club.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. When was business founded?

The business was founded in 1883.

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

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

- a. The Fly Trap has operated continuously in San Francisco for 141 years.
- b. The Fly Trap has contributed to the history and identity of the Financial District neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. The Fly Trap 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?

No.

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

No. However, many notable people have dined at the business including professional football player and Hall of Famer Bob St. Clair, as well as Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

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

Yes, the site is a contributory building under Article 11 of the Planning Code. Additionally, according to the Transit Center District Historic Resource Survey, the building appears eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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. The Fly Trap has been featured in several media sources including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Examiner*, and *SFGate*.

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.

The Fly Trap is a woman-owned business and has donated to the Sausalito Yacht Club and the Rocky Mountain Participation Nursery School.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 606 Folsom Street (1963 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 73 Sutter Street (1909 – 1963)
- 515 Golden Gate Avenue (1906 – 1909)
- 22 Sansome Street (1883 – 1906)

Recommended by Applicant

- Full-service bar and restaurant
- Comfort meets California cuisine

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: JULY 17, 2024

Case No.: 2024-005658LBR
Business Name: The Fly Trap
Business Address: 606 Folsom Street
Zoning: C-3-O(SD) (DOWNTOWN- OFFICE (SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT)) Zoning District
 320-I Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 3735/008
Applicant: Valen West
 606 Folsom Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Matt Dorsey
Located In: District 6
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 THE FLY TRAP CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 606 FOLSOM ST, BLOCK/LOT 3735/008.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on July 17, 2024 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 The Fly Trap 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 The Fly Trap.

Locations

Current Location:

- 606 Folsom Street (1963 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 73 Sutter Street (1909 – 1963)
- 515 Golden Gate Avenue (1906 – 1909)
- 22 Sansome Street (1883 – 1906)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Full-service bar and restaurant
- Comfort meets California 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 2024-005658LBR to the Office of Small Business on July 17, 2024.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

RECUSE:

ADOPTED: July 17, 2024