



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE NOVEMBER 28, 2016

SAM'S GRILL & SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

Application No.: LBR-2015-16-042
Business Name: Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant
Business Address: 374 Bush Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Peter Quartaroli, Managing Partner
Nomination Date: May 5, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant is one of San Francisco's oldest seafood restaurants, serving the Financial District neighborhood and the greater San Francisco area since 1867. The restaurant is located on Bush Street at the corner of Belden Place. Since its establishment, Sam's Grill has been grown into one of San Francisco's most beloved seafood establishments. The restaurant began when Michael Molan Moraghan started selling fresh oysters at a stall in the open-air market at the base of California Street. By the 1890s, Moraghan had developed his fresh oyster stall into a company (the Burlingame Oyster Company) and restaurant (Bay Point Oyster House) that became the City's leading seafood establishment with a focus on local oysters. Subsequently, Moraghan became known as "The Oyster King." The company continued to grow and thrive and, in 1922, was acquired by Samuel Zenovich and renamed "Sam's," and, in 1936, was sold to Frank Seput, who formalized the establishment's name as "Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant." Sam's Grill has maintained its status as a prominent downtown fixture for almost 150 years with deep ties to the Financial District, the legal community and city politics and is one of three restaurants that have thrived in San Francisco since the end of the Gold Rush. The restaurant employs a staff of 35 that includes local residents, many of whom were welcomed into the Sam's community after being impacted by the closure of other San Francisco institutions. The restaurant also has supported and continues to support community organizations, specifically through the "Dine for a Cause" event hosted by Sam's every first Tuesday of the month that consists of a series of charitable dinners where a percentage of dinner sales goes back to participating organizations.

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

Yes, the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

416 Pine Street from 1867 to 1906 (39 years)
561 California Street from 1906-1946 (40 years)
374 Bush Street from 1946-Present (70 years)



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Financial District neighborhood's history and identity.

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

- Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant is associated with the tradition of serving fresh local oysters and seafood.
- Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant has contributed to the Financial District community's history and identity by continuing to operate as one of the oldest restaurants in San Francisco and continuing to specialize in fresh local oysters.
- The 1907 property has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" as a contributory building within the designated Article 11 Kearny-Belden Conservation District. The district is also eligible for listing on the California Register.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
 - California Historical Courier, 11/1983, "Historic Restaurant Honored with HBR Award."
 - SF Chronicle, 7/22/1984, "Sam's: An Old Tradition," by Sherry Virbila.
 - SF Chronicle, 3/14/1997, "Classic Sam's Grill Wears Its Age Well," by Michael Bauer.

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

Yes, Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define its place as one of San Francisco's oldest seafood restaurants.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant 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:

- Brightly lit main room with private booths and open tables and wood partitions.
- Tradition of a professional, formally-attired wait staff.
- Small exterior neon projecting sign.
- Interior bar.
- Marine plank interior siding.
- Location within the Financial District.
- Angled, recessed entry.
- Patio with seating.
- All interior and exterior features outlined in the district landmark designation.



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant currently located at 374 Bush Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager
Legacy Business Program



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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE NOVEMBER 28, 2016

SAM'S GRILL & SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Application No.: LBR-2015-16-042
Business Name: Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant
Business Address: 374 Bush Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Peter Quartaroli, Managing Partner
Nomination Date: May 5, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR SAM'S GRILL & SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 374 BUSH STREET.

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

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

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

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

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on November 28, 2016, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore



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SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Sam’s Grill & Seafood Restaurant 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 Sam’s Grill & Seafood Restaurant:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Brightly lit main room with private booths and open tables and wood partitions.
- Tradition of a professional, formally-attired wait staff.
- Small exterior neon projecting sign.
- Interior bar.
- Marine plank interior siding.
- Location within the Financial District.
- Angled, recessed entry.
- Patio with seating.
- All interior and exterior features outlined in the district landmark designation.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on November 28, 2016.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –



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**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2015-16-042
Business Name: Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant
Business Address: 374 Bush Street
District: District 3
Applicant: Peter Quartaroli, Managing Partner
Nomination Date: May 5, 2016
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin

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

416 Pine Street from 1867 to 1906 (39 years)
561 California Street from 1906-1946 (40 years)
374 Bush Street from 1946-Present (70 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: October 3, 2016

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN
佩斯金市參事

May 5, 2016

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

Dear Director Dick-Endrizzi:

I hereby nominate Sam's Grill for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

Situated in the City's Financial District at 374 Bush Street, Sam's Grill is a long-time seafood restaurant, one of San Francisco's oldest, serving San Francisco residents, workers, and visitors since 1867. First starting out as an oyster stand, it has grown into one of the City's most beloved seafood establishments, now serving a wide variety of fresh fish and shellfish. Passing through several hands over the years, with every owner adding to restaurant's menu and reputation, it is now under the aegis of Peter Quartaroli. With excellent décor, and wait staff dressed in tuxedos, it exudes an old world charm that its patrons have grown to love.

Sam's Grill would benefit substantially from inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry, and it is my pleasure to nominate it for inclusion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron Peskin".

Aaron Peskin

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Peter Quartaroli, George Miller, John Briscoe, Barbara & Phil Lyons, Martin Coyne, Mark Buell, Robert Tufts, Mark Taylor, Brian Morton, James Gallagher, Paul McKenna, Mary Anne Saylor, Tom Raney, Peter Michael, Lawrence Bazel, John Santaguida, Dean Cash, Jeremiah Hallisey, Clint Reilly, Chris O'Sullivan, and Jeanine Bates.		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
374 Bush Street San Francisco, CA 94104		((415))421-0594
		EMAIL:
		information@samsgrillsf.com
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.samsgrillsf.com	www.facebook.com/samsgrillandseafood	www.yelp.com/biz/sams-grill-and-seafood-restaurant-san-francisco

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Peter Quartaroli	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
Managing Partner	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
155 Valley St. San Francisco, CA 94131	(415) 421-0594
	EMAIL:
	peter@samsgrillsf.com

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0392787	

OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
416 Pine Street	94104	1867
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	1867-1906	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
561 California Street	94104	Start: 1906
		End: 1946

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
374 Bush Street	94104	Start: 1946
		End: Present

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

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

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Peter Quartaroli 9/26/2016

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

Peter Quartaroli

9/26/16



Sam's Grill Legacy Business Registry Application

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative¹

CRITERION 1

- a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.**

Sam's Grill—the fifth-oldest continuously-operating restaurant in the country—opened in 1867 as an oyster saloon in San Francisco's Old California Market, an open-air food emporium that stood on the site of today's Bank of America Building (on Kearny between California and Pine). Founded by Michael Bolan Moraghan, a native of Ireland, the Bay Point Oyster House and Restaurant was originally located at 416 Pine and moved to 561 California after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. Moraghan's Burlingame Oyster Company was a leading purveyor of oysters raised in South San Francisco Bay. In 1922, Croatian Samuel Zenovich bought the restaurant and renamed it Sam's Seafood Grotto—leading to its popular nickname, "Sam's." Fellow Croatian Frank Seput took over the business in 1936, renamed it Sam's Grill and Seafood Restaurant in 1940, and eventually relocated to its present home at 374 Bush Street in 1946. Seput took sons Walter and Frank Jr. as partners; grandson Gary Seput became sole owner in 1994. Phil Lyons purchased Sam's in 2005 and nine years later sold to an ownership group comprised of Sam's regulars led by managing partner Peter Quartaroli, who started working there as a waiter in 1994.

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

The business is not currently family owned, but it was continuously operated by the Seput family for 69 years—from 1936, when Frank Seput purchased the restaurant from Sam Zenovich, until 2005, when his grandson Gary Seput sold the business to Phil Lyons.

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

Sam's Grill dates back to 1867, when Michael Bolan Moraghan began selling fresh oysters at a stall in the open-air Old California Market. The business was purchased by restaurateur Samuel Zenovich in 1922, Sam had worked his way up from bartender to owner of the Reception Café. Sam and his partner renamed Moraghan's "Zembolich and Zenovich," but the customers all called it "Sam's Place." By 1931, the eatery was listed in the directory as "Sam's Seafood Grotto." Frank Seput, another Croatian, bought the business just before Zenovich's death in 1937 and called it "Sam's Grill and Seafood Restaurant." The Seput family owned and operated Sam's for nearly 70 years. Frank Sr., Frank Jr., Walter, and Walter's son Gary oversaw the seven formative decades that helped establish what Sam's is known for today. Phil Lyons bought the restaurant in 2005 and retired in 2014, staying true to Sam's colorful history. Today, the business is operated by an ownership group headed by Peter Quartaroli, who has been part of the Sam's family since 1994. The group is a "who's who" of dedicated Sam's regulars (see list owners in application form).

¹ Application submitted on September 26, 2016. Narrative written by Mike Buhler (San Francisco Heritage), Christopher O'Sullivan (Adjunct Professor of History, University of San Francisco), and Peter Quartaroli (Managing Partner, Sam's Grill).

- d. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.**

Since 1946, Sam's has been located in the San Francisco & Tonopah Mining Exchange Building (built in 1907, 364 Bush Street), rated by the city as a Category A Historic Resource and listed as an Article 11 Contributory Building within the Kearny-Belden Conservation District.

CRITERION 2

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

Sam's Grill has been a downtown fixture for almost 150 years, with deep ties to the Financial District, the legal community, and city politics. Sam's has been featured in many books, both fiction and non-fiction. In 1983, the Seput family was presented with the California Historical Society's Historic Business Award, a Proclamation from Mayor Dianne Feinstein declaring September 16 as "Sam's Day," a Resolution from the California Senate Rules Committee, and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Board of Supervisors.

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

Sam's Grill is one of three restaurants that have thrived in San Francisco since the tail end of the Gold Rush. Sam's Grill, Tadich Grill, and The Old Clam House are three of the five oldest continuously operating restaurants in the U.S. In 2017, Sam's Grill enters its 150th year as an anchor in the Financial District.

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

Sam's Grill has been regularly reviewed, revered, and celebrated in the *San Francisco Chronicle* and many other publications throughout its history (*Chronicle* reviews from 1984 and 1997 are attached). The enclosed excerpt from the *California Historical Courier* (November 1983) shows the Seput family being presented with the California Historical Society's Historic Business Award, as well as a Proclamation from then-Mayor Dianne Feinstein declaring September 16, 1983 as "Sam's Day," a Resolution from the California Senate Rules Committee, and a Certificate of Appreciation from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. In 2013, Sam's Grill was named to S.F. Heritage's official list of "Legacy Bars & Restaurants."

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

Sam's roots can be traced to the Old California Market in 1867, when Michael Bolan Moraghan, opened an oyster saloon there. By the 1890s his business had developed into the city's leading seafood restaurant and, with its specialty local oysters, Moraghan became known as "The Oyster King." An obituary in the *Chronicle*, dated October 17, 1937, describes Samuel Zenovich, who owned Sam's from 1922 to 1936, as a "pioneer restaurant man [who] had been identified with the cafe and restaurant business in this city."

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

Sam's employs a staff of 35, many who have worked there for decades. The staff includes several waiters and kitchen staff that have been incorporated into the Sam's community after being impacted by the closure of other San Francisco institutions such as Jack's (1863-2009), Bardelli's (1909-1997), and Caesar's (1956-2012). Current Sam's waiters Walter Taylor and Yves Nicolas from Jack's are considered legends among San Francisco diners. A long-term past employee and Tenderloin resident, Tony Luccetti, is the subject of a screenplay currently in development. In addition, as an indication of its commitment to supporting community organizations, Sam's hosts "Dine for a Cause" on the first Tuesday of each month, a series of charitable dinners where 15% of the dinner sales will go back to the participating organization.

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

Sam's Grill serves the loyal community of San Francisco – the “regulars” and newcomers who have either been eating at Sam's for decades, or have heard of the famous food and business. Sam's prides itself on not being a “kiss and tell” institution that has found favor with both the famous and infamous among the residents and guests of the city. The regular customers of the financial, political, and entertainment world find respite in the curtained booths or visibility in the main dining room. Sam's serves one and all, including mayors, governors, judges, writers, artists, and titans of industry.

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

For the past 70 years, Sam's Grill has resided in the San Francisco & Tonopah Mining Exchange Building (1907) at 364 Bush Street, a two-part small commercial block bordering Belden Place. The restaurant entrance is cut out at the corner of Bush and Belden Alley; Belden Place and its half-dozen indoor/outdoor restaurants are designated a “Destination Alley” in the Downtown Streetscape Plan. As described in San Francisco Heritage's 1979 publication *Splendid Survivors*, the building features second-story fenestration reminiscent of the forms of the late 19th century, including Renaissance/Baroque ornamentation, galvanized iron cornices, paired arched windows with decorative keystones, brick construction with wood and iron posts, and stucco exterior. Sam's classic interior décor is integral to its character and has remained virtually unchanged for decades, including its etched double-glass entry doors, long wooden bar and old cash register, cubicle dining booths, wood partitions in the main dining room, marine plank siding, brass coat hooks, linoleum flooring, bentwood chairs, and crisp white table cloths. The wood-paneled booths have curtains which can be drawn for privacy, and diners can summon a waiter by pushing a button.

Designed by architect William F. Helbing, the San Francisco & Tonopah Mining Exchange was originally built for J.M. McGee of Oroville to serve as offices for the Nevada Mining Exchange. Now dwarfed by high-rise construction (including a 19-story office tower currently under construction next door at 350 Bush Street), the low-scale building forms a corner to important groups of small-scale buildings on both Bush and Belden streets. The San Francisco & Tonopah Mining Exchange Building is rated by the city as a Category A Historic Resource and is an Article 11 Contributory Building within the Kearny-Belden Conservation District. The ground floor exterior has been remodeled but the original character has been maintained. These changes include the introduction of Sam's Seafood Alley, a new heated patio and bar on Belden Place, in 2015.

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

The community of San Francisco raised and served by Sam's over the years would be greatly saddened and diminished if the restaurant was to be shut down or significantly altered. Along with the disappointment would be a loss of jobs provided to a specialized part of the restaurant trade. Many members of the staff have spent years at Sam's and would have a difficult time transferring their skill set in today's market. Sam's senior employees have become part of the culture of San Francisco's restaurant lore through decades of dedication to the roots of the restaurant – hard-working people supporting their community.

CRITERION 3

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

As described by Laura Smith Borrmann in *Discovering Vintage San Francisco* (2015), Sam's indelible character is equally defined by its physical space and its people and patrons:

Brightly lit, the main room has an almost yellowy hue—like a sepia-toned photograph—and feels somewhat like the unadorned fellowship hall of an old church. Except for those in the booths, people can be seen clearly from almost every angle, sitting beneath hooks that line the walls awaiting a coat.

or, in former times, a proper hat. ...Tabletops are a pillowy vinyl shrouded in white cloth and anchored by funky lamps that appear to be relics from the '60s. Tuxedoed waiters—almost all of a certain age—await diners' arrival at the start of lunch, hanging out near the front of the restaurant in a friendly pack, anxious for the show to begin. The room fills quickly with obvious regulars and Financial District types...

Some of the regulars have been dining at Sam's weekly or monthly for decades. A 1984 review in the *Chronicle* describes a typical scene that persists to this day: "The help all look as if they were hired from central casting for a long-forgotten B movie and play the part of the brusque no-nonsense waiter to the hilt. At lunch the place is jammed with Financial District types and the mood can be bolsterous. Dinners are quieter; it's not uncommon to see businessmen dining alone, reading newspapers or manuals while they eat." ("Sam's: An Old Tradition," Sherry Virbila, *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 22, 1984)

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

Perhaps Sam's most distinguishing feature is its professional, formally-attired wait staff, many of whom are city institutions in their own right. The retirement of longtime Sam's employees is often featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (e.g., "Old-school waiter crucial to what makes SF great," Carl Nolte, April 23, 2016, on the retirement of Giovanni Sodini). The menu is printed and dated each day because the restaurant gets daily fresh fish delivery. It features many historic recipes, including Celery Victor (originally created by chef Victor Hirtzler at the Hotel St. Francis), petrale sole, sand dabs, sweetbreads, mock turtle soup (Wednesdays only), Anchor Steam on tap, and, of course, the Hangtown Fry, an omelet with Olympia oysters and bacon that dates back to the Gold Rush. A loaf of crusty and sour sourdough bread specially baked by Boudin greets guests at each table with individual crocks of salted butter. As observed by Laura Borman in *Discovering Vintage San Francisco*, "Sam's has changed very little over the years—always with an overt respect for 'the old-fashioned.'" As evidence of this reverence for tradition, Borman cites the following excerpt from Sam's 1942 menu, which is included in the daily menu printed today: "We are Happy to present to you an Old-Fashioned Eating House with Old Fashioned Waiter Service and Old-Fashioned Private Booth together with a newly equipped kitchen for better and faster service. We want to continue to serve you as we have done in the past and keep our reputation as one of the GOOD EATING PLACES of 'Old San Francisco.' We are proud of it and hope you will be, too."

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

Sam's inhabits a low-rise building set among the high-rise monsters of the Financial District. The restaurant's legendary private booths, small exterior neon sign, inviting bar, wood partitions, and marine plank interior siding have remained virtually unchanged in the past 70 years (since moving to 374 Bush Street). Sam's currently exhibits a rotation of historical photos that are co-curated with the California Historical Society.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms.

When former owner Phil Lyons left in 2014, Sam's future was uncertain. A group of investors—all longtime customers—approached Peter Quartaroli (who was the nighttime maître d' at the time) to enlist him as managing partner. The goal of the partnership was to ensure the sustainability of a San Francisco tradition, while incorporating the owner/operator tradition that Sam's has remained true to throughout its history. After closing for three months and doing a subtle but methodical head-to-toe refurbishment and cleaning, Sam's reopened in winter of 2014 and resumed service as it had always been. The physical space remains unchanged, its time-tested traditions, and classic fare continue just as they have for nearly 150 years.

Sam's Grill Legacy Business Registry Application

Section 5: Supplemental Historical Documents

1922

**Sam's Grill and Sea Food
Restaurant**

Formerly BAY POINT OYSTER HOUSE in
the Old California Market. Est. 1867.
Specializing in Fresh Fish and Shell
Fish of all kinds. 561 California st.
S.F. 96116.

ANNOUNCEMENT

SAM ZENOVICH

formerly of
THE RECEPTION CAFE
85 Manila Ave.

Has purchased

**The Bay Point Oyster House and
Restaurant**

located at
THE CALIFORNIA MARKET

WHERE QUALITY AND SERVICE
WILL BE MAINTAINED

1932

**Civilized City Cannot Live
Without Cooks**

Editor The Chronicle—Sir: I must take exception to a statement in a very fine article mourning the closing of the famous old Pearl Oyster House, inferring that the people of San Francisco had given up their taste for the food prepared by the chefs that have made this city's cuisine famous over the United States. As an old restaurateur and the proprietor of an eating place that is a contemporary of the Pearl Oyster House I want to correct this impression.

I believe I am in a position to judge that the epicures of San Francisco are maintaining their reputation regardless of financial conditions. Good eating is one of the fine arts and when the art loving people of San Francisco desert the opera and refuse to support their art galleries then the old-time restaurants will close their doors.

San Francisco, Sept. 20, 1932. SAM ZENOVICH.

1946



1949



1977



SF Heritage Archive



Historic Restaurant Honored with HBR Award

Sam's Grill, one of San Francisco's oldest and best known restaurants, was honored on September 16 with the California Historical Society's Historic Business Award. CHS President Louis Heilbron (second from right) presents Mr. Gary Seput (second from left) and R. Walter Seput (far right) with the award, while San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein presents Sam's Grill with a proclamation declaring September 16 as "Sam's Day" and Mrs. Milton Marks (left), on behalf of the Senator, presents the California Senate Rules Committee Resolution for the special event. Supervisor Wendy Nelder (not shown) also presented Sam's Grill with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Board of Supervisors. Sam's Grill was founded in 1867 by Mr. Michael Bolan Moraghn, a native of Ireland. Half a century later, Sam Zenovich acquired the restaurant and began to operate it under the popular name of "Sam's". In 1937 the Seput family acquired the restaurant and has continued to operate it since.

EATING OUT

Sam's: An Old Tradition

BY SHERRY VIRBILA

Like Jack's and John's Grill, Sam's is one of the vestiges of San Francisco at the turn of the century. It opened in 1867, and since then, Sam's Grill and Seafood Restaurant (originally located in the old California Street Market) has served weekday lunches and dinners to generations of seafood-loving San Franciscans.

Sure enough, if you look around the modest establishment, everything seems to be original: the scruffy tables under their white tablecloths, the homely bentwood chairs, the dusty stag's head over the door. It's certain that no decorator has ever set foot inside the venerable doors etched with a double S. But there's something endearing about a place that lines up the liquor bottles under the venetian blinds and has curtained private booths along a narrow corridor.

SAM'S GRILL AND SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

27 1/2 Bush Street, San Francisco
Open 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Wine, beer and full bar. MasterCard and Visa. No reservations. 421-0594.

FOOD ★

PRICES Moderately inexpensive to moderate

PLUSES A San Francisco institution which dates from 1867, with an untamped decor. Fresh seafood, simply grilled, can be good. Private curtained booths.

MINUSES Overcooked fish and vegetables, unless you ask for them rare. Impossible desserts (with the exception of the French pancakes), rushed service at dinner.

★★★ EXCELLENT ★★ VERY GOOD ★ GOOD □ FAIR

The help all look as if they were hired from central casting for a long-forgotten B movie and play the part of the brusque no-nonsense waiter to the hilt. At lunch the place is jammed with Financial District types and the mood can be boisterous. Dinners are quieter; it's not uncommon to see businessmen dining alone, reading newspapers or manuals while they eat.

Sam's menu, printed every day, doesn't really change all that much. Still, it's a puzzle why Sam's specials — heralded in boldfaced type — seem to be some of the least successful dishes on the menu. I suspect regulars long ago learned to avoid these conceptions and stick to the simpler grilled and broiled items. Witness Sam's special seafood salad (\$10.50), a motley mix of crab, shrimp and assorted seafood rudely heaped on the plate and doused in an indifferent vinaigrette.

On the other hand, if you like batter-fried seafood and are partial to tartar sauce thick enough to stand a spoon in, Sam's special seafood platter (\$11.25) might win more favor with you than with me: nuggets of sole or other fish with scallops, crab legs and shrimp, all deep-fried a golden brown.

At Sam's, green vegetables evidently are not considered part of the businessman's lunch or dinner. If you do insist on squaring your meal, order nostalgic creamed spinach a la carte or plain string beans (\$1.50). Stewed tomatoes are best relegated to the category of never ordered. The fresh asparagus presented one Friday night looked as if it had literally been through a ringier — ragged and too limp to eat with your fingers. Even the sharp mustard-dosed mayonnaisse couldn't bring it back to attention. (Admittedly, this was at the end of the evening and I did sight a plate of more vigorous spears on its way to another table.) A better bet is fried zucchini or eggplant (\$1.75) cut in thick finger-length pieces.



Sam's Grill: Boisterous lunches, quiet dinners

The best way to order at Sam's is to put the menu aside and listen to the waiter; he really will propose what's best and freshest — and will tell you honestly if the rainbow trout that day should be passed over in favor of the salmon, for example.

Another piece of advice: get there early. This means for lunch as soon after 11 as possible, because closer to noon, you may have to fight your way to the bar, and the wait for a table can be long. Dinners are quieter but you still should come early (before 7:30, even though they ostensibly serve until 8:30).

The broiled filet of salmon bears only a ceremonial sprinkling of parsley and is served with the ubiquitous browned potatoes (\$10.75). The salmon is fresh and in generous quantity, but I had forgotten a cardinal rule of

thumb at Sam's: Order your seafood rare or it will be cooked in the old style — before the new generation of grilled-fish restaurants brought the new aesthetic of the very fresh and barely cooked fish and shellfish.

The serving of broiled deep sea swordfish (\$11.75) was half the size of the salmon and certainly too skimpily cut not to dry out on the broiler. Ask for a thick piece broiled rare and it will generally be very good. Sand dabs and rex sole are both treated well here, boned and swimming in butter (\$8.25).

Straightforward charcoal-broiled meats pass the test here. The steaks may not be up to a cattleman's standards, but they're good enough for the price, and the ample veal chop with bacon (\$10) makes a satisfying lunch or dinner. Tender French-cut lamb chops (\$13.50) should go to more dainty eaters. The broiler man has the right idea with the meats, tending to cook them more on the rare side than the well done.

Sam's has revamped and updated its modest wine list to include some good small wineries like Chateau St. Jean, Geyser Peak, Burgess or Clos du Val at fairly reasonable prices. Locally produced Anchor Steam beer is also available, along with Calistoga mineral water.

If you want dessert at dinner, keep an eye on the clock, because as it gets closer to 8:30 (and even earlier sometimes on Fridays), there may not be any pie left. There also may not be fresh strawberries and cream and you certainly won't get Sam's special French pancakes, arguably the best dessert on the menu. While you can get the pancakes sprinkled with lemon sugar (\$1.75), order them anisette (\$2.75) — served with warm butter scented with anise. The strawberry sundae is a child's nursery version: a plop of vanilla ice cream topped with frozen strawberries (\$1.75).

The coffee hails from the darkest age of coffee roasting in America, a grim, muddy brew with a tanic aftertaste. Besides, the prevailing attitude at Sam's is eat and run. At lunch, there are dozens waiting for your table. At dinner, the waiters and cooks seem in a hurry to see the last of you so they can close up and leave another long day at Sam's to San Francisco history.

1984 Menu

GARY F. and WALTER G. SEPUT ESTABLISHED 1887


SAM'S GRILL
... and ...
SEA FOOD RESTAURANT
FORMERLY IN THE OLD CALIFORNIA MARKET



OPEN DAILY FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 8:30 P.M.
(Closed Saturday and Sunday)


374 BUSH STREET
(CORNER BELDEN STREET)

TELEPHONE GARFIELD 1-0594



THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW SPECIAL SELECTIONS
FROM OUR MENU WHICH WE RECOMMEND AND
SERVE DAILY FOR LUNCH AND DINNER:

Clam Broth, Clam Chowder or Turtle Soup
Prawn, Shrimp, Crab or Oyster Cocktail
Chilled Mixed Greens with or without Shellfish
Crab, Prawn or Shrimp Salad or Louis
Sam's Special Salad (Consists of Hearts of Steamed Celery,
Tomatoes, Avocado and Choice of Shellfish)
Boned Rex Sole or Sand Dabs a la Sam
Charcoal Broiled Filet of Petrale
Fried Assorted Seafood Plate
Sam's Special Deviled Crab en Casserole
Prawns Fried, Meuniere Sauce
Fried Eastern Scallops, Tartar Sauce
Fried Selected Crab Legs on Toast
Cherrystone Clams, Steamed, Fried or Baked
a la Elizabeth
Omelette with Chicken Livers
Spring Chicken Saute with Fresh Mushrooms
New York Steak a la Minute, Bercy
French Pancakes with Anisette



1984 Menu

MONDAY, APRIL 23, 1984

WELCOME TO SAM'S GRILL
Our Pleasure To Serve You

AN APERTIF OR A COCKTAIL
Will Stimulate Your Appetite
and
Add Enjoyment to Your Meal

Appetizers

Bay Shrimp Cocktail	4.75
Prawn Cocktail	5.00
Dungeness Crab Cocktail	6.25
Olympia Oyster Cocktail	6.25
Cherrystone Clam Cocktail	5.75
Sam's Shellfish Cocktail	6.00
Avocado Cocktail	3.00
Fried Zucchini	1.75
Fried Eggplant	1.75

Soups

French Onion Soup	1.25	Bowl	1.50
Mock Turtle Soup	1.50	Bowl	1.75
Coney Island Clam Chowder	2.00	Bowl	2.25
Clam Broth in Cup			1.25

Salads

Fresh Asparagus, Mustard Sauce	2.75
Mixed Greens	4.00 with Shellfish 9.75
Sliced Tomatoes	4.00 with Shellfish 9.75
Avocado Salad	5.50 with Shellfish 10.50
Fresh Vegetable	5.50 with Shellfish 10.50
Anchovy Salad	5.75
Shrimp Salad or Louie	8.50
Prawn Salad or Louie	9.50
Crab Salad or Louie	10.25
Heart of Romaine with Shellfish	10.00
Sam's Special Seafood Salad	10.50
Heart of Romaine with Red Beans	4.75
Cold Boiled Ham with Red Beans	6.00
Half Avocado	3.75
Celery Victor	6.00

Eggs and Omelettes

Ham or Bacon and Eggs	5.00
Ham or Bacon Omelette	5.00
Shirred Eggs with Crab, Cream Sauce	10.50
Shirred Eggs, with Spinach Florentine	5.50
Spanish Omelette	5.25
Fresh Mushroom Omelette	5.75
Olympia Oyster Omelette	9.25
Hangtown Fry	9.50
Shrimp, Prawn or Crab Omelette	10.50
Smoked Alaskan Cod, Scrambled Eggs	9.00

Sales Tax will be Added to the Price
of all Food and Beverage Items served

Visa or Mastercard Accepted

Today's Specials for Lunch

Baked Chicken with Noodles au Gratin	5.80
Deviled Crab ala Sam	10.50
Sam's Special Seafood Salad	10.50
Breaded Veal Cutlet with Tagliarini and Mushroom Sauce	8.00
Salisbury Steak with Mushroom Sauce with Tagliarini and Parmesan	7.00
Fresh Mushrooms Sautee, Toast	6.00
Sam's Special Seafood Platter	11.25

Shellfish

Eastern Scallops, Fried	9.75
Deep Sea Prawns, Fried	10.00
Dungeness Crab Legs, Fried	13.00
California Abalone, Mousiere	19.50
Olympia Oysters, Fried or Milk Stew	9.00
Cherrystone Clams, Fried or Steamed	9.50
Steamed Cherrystone Clams, Bordelaise	9.75
Clams Elizabeth	10.50
Sam's Special Seafood Platter	11.25

Fish

Fried Calamari Steak ala Sam's	8.50
Boned Rex Sole ala Sam	8.25
Boned Sand Dabs ala Sam	8.25
Broiled Filet of Patrale	9.50
Broiled Deep Sea Swordfish	11.75
Broiled Salmon Steak	10.75
Poached Salmon, Egg Sauce	11.00
Broiled Pacific Red Snapper	7.25
Fried Filet of English Sole	6.75
Smoked Alaskan Cod, Steamed	8.50
Broiled Fresh Rainbow Trout	8.50
California Halibut	9.50

Casseroles Ala Sam

Asparagus Milanaise	5.75
Deviled Crab ala Sam	10.50
Crab au Gratin	10.75
Creamed Crab with Noodles	10.50
Crab Newburg ala Sam	10.75
Shrimp Creole or Curry with Rice	8.50
Prawn Creole or Curry with Rice	10.00
Crab Creole or Curry with Rice	10.50
Salmon with Shrimp, Creole or Newburg ala Sam	9.50
Filet of Sole ala Marguery	8.25
Tagliarini with Mushroom Sauce	4.50

Not Responsible for Articles Lost
or Exchanged on the Premises

Today's Specials for Dinner

Deviled Crab ala Sam	10.50
Sam's Special Seafood Platter	11.25
Clams Elizabeth	10.50
Veal Scallopine ala Sam	9.00
Sweetbreads Sautee ala Poulotte	8.75
Sweetbreads Sautee, Fresh Mushrooms	8.75

Chicken

Broiled or Fried (Half)	5.75
Sautee au Sec	6.25
Sautee with Fresh Mushrooms	6.75
Chicken Elizabeth	7.50

Charcoal Broiled Meats

Salisbury Steak, Mushroom Sauce	7.00
with Tagliarini, Parmesan	7.50
New York Minute Steak, Berry	11.00
New York Cut	13.00
Top Sirloin	11.50
Veal Chop with Bacon	10.00
Veal Porterhouse with Bacon	10.25
French Cut Lamb Chops	13.50
Cal's Liver with Bacon or Onions	7.00
Sweetbreads with Bacon	8.50

Vegetables

Fresh Asparagus	2.75
Spinach, Plain or Creamed	1.50
String Beans	1.50
Broccoli	1.50
Zucchini	1.75
Eggplant	1.75
Stewed Tomatoes	1.50
Garden Peas	1.50

Potatoes

Au Gratin	1.75
Boiled	1.25
Baked	1.50
Shoestring	1.75
Long Branch	1.75
Hash Brown	1.75

Cheeses

Camembert	1.75	Monterey Jack	1.50
Brie	1.75	Danish Blue	1.50

Desserts

Half Cantaloup	1.25
Fresh Strawberries with Cream	2.00
Chocolate Cheese Cake	2.25
Cheese Cake	2.00
Pie	1.75
Ala Mode	2.25
Ice Cream or Sherbet	1.50
Strawberry Sundae	1.75
Chocolate Sundae	2.00
French Pancakes, Lemon sugar or Jelly	1.75
French Pancakes, Anisette	2.75

NO SUBSTITUTIONS, PLEASE



Inglencook Chablis or
Mundavi Red Table Wine Per Glass 1.50

White Wines

	Half	Full
Geyser Peak Fume Blanc		8.50
Callaway Fume Blanc		10.50
Chateau St. Jean Fume Blanc		12.50
Mundavi Fume Blanc		12.50
Spring Mountain Sauvignon Blanc		14.25
Geyser Peak Chardonnay	5.00	9.50
Burgess Chardonnay		13.50
Alexander Valley Chardonnay		14.50
Chateau St. Jean Chardonnay		15.50
Iron Horse Chardonnay		16.00
Edna Valley Chardonnay		16.50
Chateau Montelena Chardonnay		20.00
J. Lohr Johannisberg Riesling		8.90
Wente Bros. Grey Riesling	3.75	7.25
Charles Krug Chenin Blanc		7.75
Alexander Valley Gewurztraminer		8.75

Red Wines

Parducci Gamay Beaujolais	3.25	6.25
Beaulieu Cabernet Sauvignon		10.25
Charles Krug Cabernet Sauvignon	5.50	10.75
Clos du Val Cabernet Sauvignon		10.50
Sutter Home Zinfandel		9.25
Burgess Pinot Noir		12.00
Acacia Pinot Noir		19.50

Champagne

Domaine Chandon, Napa Valley Brut	15.75
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Beer

Budweiser Lite	1.25
Coors	1.25
Budweiser	1.25
Becks	1.75
Heineken	1.75
Anchor Steam Beer	1.75

Mineral Water

Callistoga	1.00
Perrier	1.50

Beverages

Coffee or Tea	.75
Freshly Brewed Decaffeinated Coffee	.75
Iced Tea or Coffee	.75
Milk	.75

Water Served Upon Request
No Food Service Less than 4.50, per person

California Historical Society



1997

374 Bush; File: 374 Bush 3/12/1997
N *** San Francisco Chronicle D13

■ DINING UPDATE

Classic Sam's Grill Wears Its Age Well

BY MICHAEL BAUER

Chronicle Food Editor

Traditional restaurants — especially ones that last 130 years like Sam's Grill — are hard to keep afloat in a society obsessed with the newest and latest. But when you walk through the etched double doors at Sam's, you begin to understand what we may be missing.

The classic San Francisco grill interior is well worn — and it has worn well. My imagination does cartwheels when I look through the side door to the left and see glimpses of the long row of private, paneled dining cubicles with brown print drapes at the openings. What meetings have taken place behind those drawn drapes?

In the more public part of the restaurant, I can't help but chuckle when I see the 135 tarnished brass coat hooks that line the white plastered walls, especially since there are more hooks than seats. The long wooden bar at the entrance and the crisp white-clothed tables with bentwood chairs are simple but inviting.

The menu is filled with classics and really don't seem at all out of date because of the lighter approach in the kitchen and our current passion for simple foods. The main problem is that most items — sauteed chops, fish and the like — are crowded onto tiny dinner plates that look more appropriate for a hash house.

Petrale sole (\$13.50), fanned on



BY CHRIS STEWART/THE CHRONICLE

Sam's Grill, shown in 1984, is 130 years old and timeless

SAM'S GRILL

374 Bush St. (near Kearny), San Francisco
(415) 421-0594

Lunch and dinner 11 a.m.-9 p.m. weekdays. Full bar. Reservations accepted at dinner. Credit cards accepted. Street parking difficult at lunch; parking lots nearby.

Overall ★★½

Food ★★½

Service ★★

Atmosphere ★★½

Prices \$\$-\$\$\$



Photo courtesy Christopher Michel, 2016



Photo courtesy Christopher Michel, 2016



Photo courtesy Christopher Michel, 2016



Photo courtesy Brandon Borrmann, 2015



Photo courtesy Brandon Borrmann, 2015



Giovanni Sodini, March 2016

Photo courtesy Christopher Michel, 2016



Photos courtesy Christopher Michel, 2016



Photo courtesy Christopher Michel, 2016



Photo courtesy Brandon Borrman, 2015



Photo courtesy Brandon Borrman, 2015



Photo courtesy Brandon Borrman, 2015



Photo W.D. Worden via Flickr, 2014



Sam's Grill's ownership group, March 2015

Filing Date: October 3, 2016
Case No.: 2016-013483LBR
Business Name: Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant
Business Address: 374 Bush Street
Zoning: C-3-O (Downtown-Office)/
50-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0269/004
Applicant: Peter Quartaroil, Managing Partner
374 Bush Street
San Francisco, CA 94104
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Stephanie Cisneros - (415) 575-9186
stephanie.cisneros@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant is a long-time seafood restaurant, one of San Francisco's oldest, serving the Financial District neighborhood and the greater San Francisco area since 1867. The restaurant is located on Bush Street at the corner of Belden Place in a two-story Eclectic style building with Renaissance and Baroque features constructed in 1907. The building was designed by architect William F. Helbing as the San Francisco & Tonopah Mining Exchange. Since its establishment, Sam's Grill has been grown into one of San Francisco's most beloved seafood establishments. The restaurant originally started out in 1867 when Michael Molan Moraghan after he began selling fresh oysters at a stall in the open-air market at the base of California Street. By the 1890s Moraghan had developed his fresh oyster stall into a company (the Burlingame Oyster Company) and restaurant (Bay Point Oyster House) that became the City's leading seafood establishment with a focus on local oysters. Subsequently, Moraghan became known as "The Oyster King." The company continued to grow and thrive and, in 1922, was acquired by Samuel Zenovich and renamed "Sam's" and, in 1936, was sold to Frank Seput, who formalized the establishment's name as "Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant." Sam's Grill has maintained its status as a prominent downtown fixture for almost 150 years with deep ties to the Financial District, the legal community and city politics and is one of three restaurants that have thrived in San Francisco since the end of the Gold Rush. The restaurant employs a staff of 35 that includes local residents, many of whom were welcomed into the Sam's community after being impacted by the closure of other San Francisco institutions. The restaurant also has supported and continues to support community organizations, specifically through the "Dine for a Cause" event hosted by Sam's every first Tuesday of the month that consists of a series of charitable dinners where a percentage of dinner sales goes back to participating organizations.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

1867

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

Yes, Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant has operated for 149 years.
- ii. Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant has contributed to the Financial District community's history and identity by continuing to operate as one of the oldest restaurants in San Francisco and continuing to specialize in fresh local oysters.
- iii. Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define its place as one of San Francisco's oldest seafood restaurants.

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

Yes. Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant is associated with the tradition of serving fresh local oysters and seafood.

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

Yes. The 1907 property has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department for potential historical significance. The property is considered a "Category A Property" as a contributory building within the designated Article 11 Kearny-Belden Conservation District. The district is also eligible for listing on the California Register

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

The property is located within the Kearny-Belden California Register-eligible Conservation District.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. California Historical Courier, 11/1983, "Historic Restaurant Honored with HBR Award;" SF Chronicle, 7/22/1984, "Sam's: An Old Tradition," by Sherry Virbila; SF Chronicle, 3/14/1997, "Classic Sam's Grill Wears Its Age Well," by Michael Bauer;

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 374 Bush Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Brightly lit main room with private booths and open tables and wood partitions
- Tradition of a professional, formally-attired wait staff
- Small exterior neon projecting sign
- Interior bar
- Marine plank interior siding

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Location within the Financial District
- Angled, recessed entry
- Patio with seating
- Staff recommends that all interior and exterior features outlined in the district landmark designation continue to be maintained



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 817 HEARING DATE NOVEMBER 2, 2016

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

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

Case No.: 2016-013483LBR
Business Name: Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant
Business Address: 374 Bush Street
Zoning: C-3-O (Downtown-Office)/
50-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0269/004
Applicant: Peter Quartaroil, Managing Partner
374 Bush Street
San Francisco, CA 94104
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, District 3
Staff Contact: Stephanie Cisneros - (415) 575-9186
stephanie.cisneros@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR SAM'S GRILL & SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 374 BUSH STREET (BLOCK/LOT 0269/004).

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 Financial District 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 November 2, 2016, 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 Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant 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 Sam's Grill & Seafood Restaurant

Location (if applicable)

- 374 Bush Street

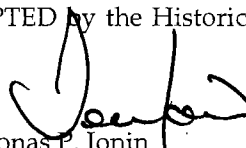
Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Brightly lit main room with private booths and open tables and wood partitions
- Tradition of a professional, formally-attired wait staff
- Small exterior neon projecting sign
- Interior bar
- Marine plank interior siding
- Location within the Financial District
- Angled, recessed entry
- Patio with seating
- Staff recommends that all interior and exterior features outlined in the district landmark designation continue to be maintained

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 2016-013483LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was **ADOPTED** by the Historic Preservation Commission on November 2, 2016.


Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Johns, Hasz, Hyland, Johnck, Pearlman, Wolfram

NOES: None

ABSENT: Matsuda

ADOPTED: November 2, 2016