

# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE OCTOBER 22, 2018

## FIRESIDE CAMERA

*Application No.:* LBR-2017-18-038  
*Business Name:* Fireside Camera  
*Business Address:* 2117 Chestnut Street  
*District:* District 2  
*Applicant:* Spencer Pon, CFO  
*Nomination Date:* March 7, 2018  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Catherine Stefani  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Fireside Camera was founded in 1954 by William and Egon Fireside as an independent photo store in the Marina District. For 40+ years, Egon Fireside photographed many of San Francisco's elite, specializing in weddings, portraits, and event photography and becoming one of San Francisco's most renowned wedding photographers.

In the 1970s, photography became more commonplace and people took more of their own family pictures, so Fireside Studios evolved and added retail to its services. This change was reflected in the name which changed to Fireside Camera. Fireside Camera was one of the first importers of Olympus cameras. As retail became a larger and larger part of the business, sales people were hired, including Jack Shim in 1976, Edmond Lee in 1983 and Spencer Pon in 1984. At the turn of the century, Egon and his wife Lucy decided to retire and offered the store to Shim, Lee and Pon, who purchased the business and are the current owners. Under their ownership, the business has kept alive the "service first" attitude that made Fireside Camera the destination for all of San Francisco's photographic needs.

The business is located on the southwest corner of Chestnut and Steiner streets in the Marina District.

### 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:

2117 Chestnut Street from 1954 to Present (64 years)  
2185 Chestnut Street in 2009 (3 months)

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





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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Marina 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:

- Fireside Camera is associated with is associated with the art of photography.
Fireside Camera has contributed to the history and identity of San Francisco by serving as a photograph and camera store.
The property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status of "B" (Properties Requiring Further Consultation and Review) as the building was constructed in 1928 and has not been formally evaluated.
Fireside Camera has consistently been one of the highest rated camera stores in San Francisco on YELP.

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

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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Fireside Camera 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:

- Selection of new and used camera equipment.
Film processing and digital printing services.
Signage.
Cabinets originally bought by the Firesides.

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.

- Camera store.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Fireside Camera currently located at 2117 Chestnut Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Program Manager
Legacy Business Program



# Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE OCTOBER 22, 2018

FIRESIDE CAMERA

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

*Application No.:* LBR-2017-18-038  
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## ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR FIRESIDE CAMERA, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2117 CHESTNUT 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 October 22, 2018, 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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OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Fireside Camera 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 Fireside Camera:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Selection of new and used camera equipment.
• Film processing and digital printing services.
• Signage.
• Cabinets originally bought by the Firesides.

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

- Camera store.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on October 22, 2018.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

- Ayes -
Nays -
Abstained -
Absent -





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LONDON N. BREED, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**Legacy  
Business  
Registry**

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2017-18-038  
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**CRITERION 1:** Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?  Yes  No

2117 Chestnut Street from 1954 to Present (64 years)  
2185 Chestnut Street in 2009 (3 months)

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

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

**NOTES:** N/A

**DELIVERY DATE TO HPC:** September 19, 2018

Richard Kurylo  
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 2



City and County of San Francisco

## CATHERINE STEFANI

March 7, 2018

San Francisco Office of Small Business  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4681

Dear Director Dick-Endrizzi:

I hereby nominate Fireside Camera Inc. to the Legacy Business Registry of San Francisco. Fireside Camera Inc. was originally founded by Egon and Lucy Fireside in 1954, celebrating 64 years in business this year. The business has been a staple in the Marina District and continues to add to the vibrancy of the neighborhood's culture and community.

Jack Shim, a Principal Partner of Fireside Camera Inc. and San Francisco native, was hired at the business in 1977. He and his partners, Spencer Pon and Edmond Lee (also natives of our City), have grown with the business in many different positions and capacities over the last 40 years. All three own the business together today. The business has thrived through immense technological changes in the photography field and camera industry. Jack, Spencer and Edmond are beloved by residents and visitors to the Marina and continue to contribute to the area's rich history and vibrant future.

Fireside Camera, Inc. is committed to continue to offer full services at this traditional camera store on Chestnut Street at the same location it has operated since its opening.

I look forward to Fireside Camera Inc.'s ongoing success as a Legacy Business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Catherine Stefani".

Catherine Stefani  
San Francisco Supervisor, District 2

# 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.

<b>NAME OF BUSINESS:</b>		
FIRESIDE CAMERA INC.		
<b>BUSINESS OWNER(S)</b> (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
JACK SHIM SPENCER PON EDMOND LEE		
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:</b>		<b>TELEPHONE:</b>
<b>Fireside Camera</b> 2117 Chestnut Street San Francisco, CA 94123-2708		(415) 567-8131
		<b>EMAIL:</b>
		FIRESIDECAMERA@YAHOO.COM
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<b>FACEBOOK PAGE:</b>	<b>YELP PAGE</b>
FIRESIDECAMERA.COM		FIRESIDE CAMERA
<b>APPLICANT'S NAME</b>		
SPENCER PON		<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
<b>APPLICANT'S TITLE</b>		
CFO		
<b>APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:</b>		<b>TELEPHONE:</b>
C/O <b>Fireside Camera</b> 2117 Chestnut Street San Francisco, CA 94123-2708		[REDACTED]
		<b>EMAIL:</b>
		[REDACTED]
<b>SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:</b>		<b>SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):</b>
0047180		C1008706
<small>OFFICIAL USE: completed by OSBS</small>		
<b>NAME OF NOMINATOR:</b>		<b>DATE OF NOMINATION:</b>

## 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
2117 CHESTNUT ST.	94123	MAY 1954
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	MAY 1954 TO PRESENT	
OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
2185 CHESTNUT STREET	94123	Start: APRIL 2009 End: JUNE 2009
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:
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.


Name (Print):

SPENCER POIN

Date:

SEPT 14, 2018

Signature:



## **FIRESIDE CAMERA**

### **Section 4: Written Historical Narrative**

#### **CRITERION 1**

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

Fireside Camera, founded in 1954 by William and Egon Fireside, is an independent photo store located at 2117 Chestnut Street in the heart of San Francisco's Marina District.

Egon Fireside was born in Austria in 1923 to William and Dori Fireside. Fireside is the anglicized version of their name. They fled Austria during the Nazi rise. During World War II they settled in Shanghai, China, where Egon obtained an apprenticeship to a photographer. On his first day as the photographer's apprentice, Egon was all set to go in and learn the art of portraiture. His boss had a different idea, gave him a broom, and told him to sweep. Eventually, the photographer did teach the art of photographic portraiture to Egon. Going from apprentice to master photographer, Egon photographed many prominent officials in Shanghai. Egon met Lucy in Shanghai, and they married in 1950.

After the war ended, William, Dori, Egon and Lucy immigrated to Bolivia. Egon and Lucy had two boys – Joe and Harry. (Harry, in his own right, would become one of San Francisco's best known jewelry designers, even having a display in the coveted Sak's Fifth Avenue store window.) Later they decided to move to Vancouver, Canada. On the way, they passed through San Francisco. They knew this city was where they wanted to call home. So in 1953, they moved here permanently, eventually becoming U.S. citizens.

In 1954, William and Egon opened "Fireside Studios" on Chestnut Street where for the next 40+ years Egon photographed many of San Francisco's elite. He specialized in weddings, portraits, and event photography, becoming one of San Francisco's most renowned wedding photographers. After displaying portraits in the storefront, Egon became much sought after for family portraiture as well. To this day, we still have customers who come in and say, "I had my wedding (or communion or family pictures) taken by Egon 30 years ago."

In the 1970s, photography became more commonplace and people took more of their own family pictures. Fireside Studios had to evolve and retail was added into the mix. Fireside Camera was born. In fact, Fireside Camera was one of the first importers of Olympus cameras. As retail became a larger and larger part of the business, sales people were hired. Egon still did portraiture, weddings and event photography. Lucy had always been an integral part of the store. From making the children smile during portrait shoots to handling the receivables and payments and investments, she was the heart of the store. Everyone in the neighborhood knew and liked Lucy Fireside. Not only did she have good relationships with the Marina merchants, but with many other San Francisco merchants in various industries as well.

Around 1976 a tall lanky Asian kid started coming to the store looking for deals for his high school yearbook. Joe Fireside took a liking to the high schooler and offered him some deals. After he

graduated from high school, Egon and Joe offered him a job. That kid, Jack Shim, would eventually become the majority owner of Fireside Camera, holding the positions of assistant manager and store manager along the way.

Business was doing well. More sales people were needed. In 1983, Edmond Lee was working across the street at “Fotos and Film.” His friend wanted to buy a flash for his Nikon camera, so Ed brought him into the store. Egon himself pulled out the flash to show the customer. Egon was a portrait photographer and could use a flash, but he didn’t know the specifics of each flash. It was busy in the store so no sales person was available to answer questions. Ed, being a photographer himself who kept up with the latest equipment, proceeded to “sell” his friend the flash, demonstrating its features. Ed and Fireside Camera were the perfect fit. Ed was hired soon after.

A year later, 1984, Fireside Camera needed another sales person. Ed suggested his high school friend who had worked for two years in another camera store in Daly City. Henry, the manager at the time, told him to ask his friend if he was interested. Ed asked. The friend said he wouldn’t mind a part-time job while he finished up his studies at San Francisco State University. He came in and Henry took him to Hunt’s Donuts (another Marina Business that has vanished) for an interview. Spencer Pon started the next week.

The three current owners are Jack, Ed and Spencer. At the turn of the century, Egon and Lucy decided they wanted to retire. Since the operation had always been a family run shop, they knew the only people they trusted to keep their legacy alive was “the boys,” how they referred to Jack, Ed, and Spencer, the ones who felt like family. Until their passing, Egon and Lucy would continue to come in and help out. It was still a family shop, in feel not blood.

The year 2001 was especially tough for Egon and Lucy, losing both their sons within two weeks. Egon lost his love, Lucy, in 2003 after 53 years of marriage. In 2012, the last original founder, Egon Fireside, passed away at 89 years of age.

The spirit of the Firesides lives on in their namesake store. Together, Jack Shim, Ed Lee, and Spencer Pon have kept alive the “service first” attitude that made Fireside Camera the destination point for all of San Francisco’s photographic needs. Having run the store for over 30 years uniquely qualifies Jack, Ed, and Spencer as elite San Francisco business owners; and being in the same location for over 60 years definitely qualifies Fireside Camera as a true San Francisco legacy.

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

Fireside Studios and now Fireside Camera have been located at 2117 Chestnut Street since its inception in May of 1954. There were 3 remodels done over the years. The first was done in the 1970s before any of the current team was of working age. The second was a “mini” remodel and a minor facelift in 1997 that took all of one weekend to do. In 2009, after 55 years, it was decided that a major renovation was due and an architect and construction crew were hired. The entire staff knew that the neighborhood didn’t want to lose their camera store, even if for just a summer. Fortunately the chain store film processor down the block (a Ritz Camera location) had recently declared bankruptcy and closed their outlet at 2185 Chestnut Street. Fireside rented it for the summer, spent a few days preparing the building for customers and moved everything over. From April to June of 2009, our customers found us where “Toss Designs” is now located.

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

Fireside Camera is not presently a family-owned business, but it was a family business under the ownership of the Firesides from 1954 to 2000.

All three of the current owners have the entrepreneurial spirit in their genes. Jack's family owned a corner grocery (May's Market). Ed's sister owned a Fisherman's Wharf souvenir shop (Lotus Tree). Spencer's family owned a butcher shop (Folsom and 22nd Street Meat Market). All of the stores were located in San Francisco, and all three of the Fireside owners worked in their respective family-owned businesses.

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

Following is the ownership history of Fireside Camera:

1954 to 1970:	William and Egon & Lucy Fireside
1970 to 2000:	Egon & Lucy Fireside
2000 to Present:	Jack Shim, Edmond Lee, and Spencer Pon

**e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.**

Documentation demonstrating the existence of Fireside Camera for 30+ years is included in this Legacy Business Registry application.

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

The historic resource status of the "Cinema 21" building that houses Fireside Camera is categorized by the Planning Department as Category B ("Unknown / Age Eligible") with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act.

## **CRITERION 2**

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

Fireside Camera (originally Fireside Studios) has been a staple of the Marina community since 1954, 64 years. The business is located in the heart of San Francisco's Marina District at 2117 Chestnut Street. The 2+ blocks of Chestnut Street from 2000-2299 have been well known as a premier retail area in San Francisco for many decades. When Apple Computer, one of the biggest retailers in the world, had an opportunity to open a retail store here (a mere 2.9 miles away from their 300 Post Street location) they jumped at the chance.

Fireside Camera has been providing all retail aspects of photography and most videography for over 30 years. Printing and video copying and transferring services are also available. Whether using film or

digital media, Fireside Camera strives to provide the most comprehensive equipment and information to its customers.

We have seen babies in strollers grow up and bring in their own children in strollers. We consider the vast majority of our customers to be our friends and we are always here to help, even if it's just making change for the meters or helping little old ladies with their clock radios. Egon Fireside knew that it was customer service that leads to goodwill and repeat business. It is that idea that has always run Fireside Camera. It is why our motto has always been "Discount Prices With Full Service."

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

Fireside Camera was open during the 1989 earthquake. During the quake, we saw the huge flexing of the windows at Lucca Delicatessen across the street and the bricks fall from atop Big 5 Sporting Goods. We didn't raise any prices for batteries after the tragedy, although some stores did. As soon as power was restored to the Marina district, Fireside Camera reopened to serve the community. One of the saddest stories relates to the '89 earthquake. A man came in to have pictures printed of his small son that he lost in the earthquake. Spencer just couldn't charge him for them. After the customer left, Spencer had to go in back and shed some tears of his own. He still wells up just thinking about it, and that was 29 years ago.

For many years there was the bi-annual Lion's Club Pancake Breakfast in the neighborhood. We'd all come out early on that Saturday and make the donation and talk and eat with our neighbors. We'd shop at the Steiner Street Farmer's Market for the 2-3 summers that it existed. Due to the limited size of the Marina district merchants (2 to 3 blocks), there's no street fair like Union Street and Fillmore Street have annually.

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

Fireside Camera has consistently been one of the highest rated camera stores in San Francisco on YELP. In one listing on a competitor's review it said to stay away from Discount Camera and go see Spencer at Fireside Camera as he was very helpful.

We are a member of the Photographic Research Organization, a member group devoted to providing the better quality photographic items.

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

Our customer base includes many prominent San Franciscans. Families including Haas and Eisenhardt, Swig, Fisher, Thieriot, Gund, Doerr, Getty, and Traina shopped at Fireside Camera. Celebrities including Robin Williams, Barry Zito, Carlos Santana, David Caruso, Kristie Yamaguchi, Linda Ronstadt, Conan O'Brien, Trevor Noah, Russ "the Moose" Syracuse, Gary Radnich and many have been customers. Many San Francisco politicians, including mayors and supervisors, have also shopped here.

Spencer's favorite memory involved Robin Williams. On one of the many times he came into our store, he purchased six batteries for his cyclometer. Two days later he came back and said he wanted to buy six more of the same batteries he had just bought. Spencer jokingly commented that he must've biked a hell of a lot these past two days. He said, "I wish; I lost the package."

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

We are part of the Marina District. People know and, more importantly, trust us. I can't recall how many times people from other stores have come to us to borrow a tool, or ask us if we can help them safely remove an errant bird that flew into their store. One time, another merchant came in to borrow a camera to photograph a falcon that flew into their store. When The Good Guys opened, they came to Fireside to borrow some tripods to use as displays for their video equipment. We are always here to help our neighborhood and community.

Jack Shim has been a volunteer volleyball coach in San Francisco. The owner's have made donations to various causes, such as Breast Cancer Research, The American Diabetes Association, etc. As for local charities and foundations, we have donated equipment to the SF Nature Education and cash to The Heavenly Hope House.

Fireside Camera is a vendor to many SFUSD schools as well as local private schools (such as Town School).

Although our staff is too small to offer formal classes, we are always willing to help with photo related questions. Sporadically, we have offered local photo walks around Golden Gate Park, the Palace of Fine Arts, and Pier 39.

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

Although the vast majority of our customers are located within San Francisco (the Marina district in particular) and Marin, we have customers that come from various countries. Amazingly some foreign nationals actually come in annually to buy the latest models of cameras from us.

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

We have been in the same physical structure since 1954. The building has been owned by the same family the entire time. It is the same building that houses the Marina Theatre.

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

If Fireside Camera were to close, San Francisco would lose its oldest independent camera store.

In 2009, when Fireside Camera was undergoing a major remodel and moved to 2185 Chestnut Street for three months, customers through the store was going out of business. Constantly during the move, customers would come up to us almost crying, asking why we were closing. After explaining we were only remodeling and temporarily moving half a block down the street, they were relieved and thankful not to lose, as they said, "the best camera shop in San Francisco."

The neighborhood has lost so many businesses over the years, including Kimmel's Stationary, O Sole Mio, Cybelles Pizzeria, Village Pizzeria, Mrs. Fields Cookies, two different doughnut shops, Ovation, Capri, Victoria's Secret, See's Candies, Baskin Robbins Ice Cream, Big 5 Sporting Goods, Jack's Smoke Shop, House of Magic, Marina Skate, Bare Essentials, Johnny Rockets, The Good Guys, Radio Shack, Marina Cyclery, Scotts Seafood and Chestnut Street Bar and Grill. More recently, it's lost Janie and Jack, Giggles, Laline, Askew Grill and Barneys. There were many more in addition to the ones mentioned.

There used to be several local independent camera stores in San Francisco, Adolph Gassers, Brooks, Osaka Ya, Photo Factory, "GET," Mission Photo, Retlaw, Camerabug, Jebe's and SF Discount Camera. All have closed. Adolph Gassers even owns their property and decided it was too difficult to stay in business. Samy's from Los Angeles, however, has opened an outlet near the 9th Street freeway exit. With so many internet retailers and cell phones having cameras, the retail photo business is very difficult, yet a single local dealer (Fireside Camera) has survived.

We hope to stay HERE many more years and think our listing on the San Francisco Legacy Business Registry will aid in keeping our 64-year-old San Francisco business thriving. We strive to remain the preeminent photo retailer in San Francisco. Any help from our great city is immensely appreciated.

### **CRITERION 3**

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

Fireside Camera is San Francisco's oldest independent camera store. Though small, we offer an excellent selection of new and used equipment including Nikon, Canon, Sony, Fuji, Olympus, Panasonic, and Leica Cameras, lenses, camcorders, and accessories. We sell bags from LowePro, Tamrac, Wandred, and San Francisco's own Peak Design. We also, can make prints from film, memory cards, and even cell phones. We can scan old photographs to make copies or discs. We can transfer old movies and tapes onto DVDs. We can have your equipment serviced, and we also have a limited amount of equipment available for rent. We still sell film. And, we still take passport and immigration photos. In fact, we one of the very few who take photos for Canadian Passports.

Many people are surprised that we still sell and process film. We still help people with questions about film cameras as well as digital cameras.

Fireside Cameras provides passport photographs. Egon once told the present owners of taking passport pictures in the "olden days." He would take the photograph, go upstairs to develop the "glass negatives," print them in the darkroom, cut them to size and finally give the customer the two pictures. All this took an hour or two. In 1984, we were using a Polaroid camera that used the "peel apart" film for taking passport. A pair of pictures took all of 10 minutes, half that time was waiting for the pictures to dry. Now with digital photography, not only is it faster but, you can preview the shot so you only print the good photo.

#### **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)**

Fireside Camera is committed to maintaining a retail camera store. We want people to keep hard copy prints of their memories. In this day and age too many only store photos on their phone. When it breaks many memories are lost. When the cloud gets hacked, your pictures are no longer private. With an album, you keep control over who can see your pictures and have access to them. We are here to give everyone that option.

#### **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.).**

Throughout all the changes that time has brought, we still are only a brick and mortar retailer. Our signage has become more modern (you can now see our name as you walk down the block, not just from across the street, but our design of a front door in the middle of the building with display windows flanking it is still present. Our cash register has been in the same location for decades, and most of our cabinets have been with us through the remodels – all bought by Egon and Lucy. So although we've updated to keep a fresh look, the past is always a part of us.

**d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.**

Fireside Camera has provided photographic services, equipment and supplies to customers since it was founded in 1954.





# FIRESIDE CAMERA

**Kodak**  
PROCESSING

**ROYAL**  
DEALER









Camera mera

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RESIDE

Huge Audio  
SALE!

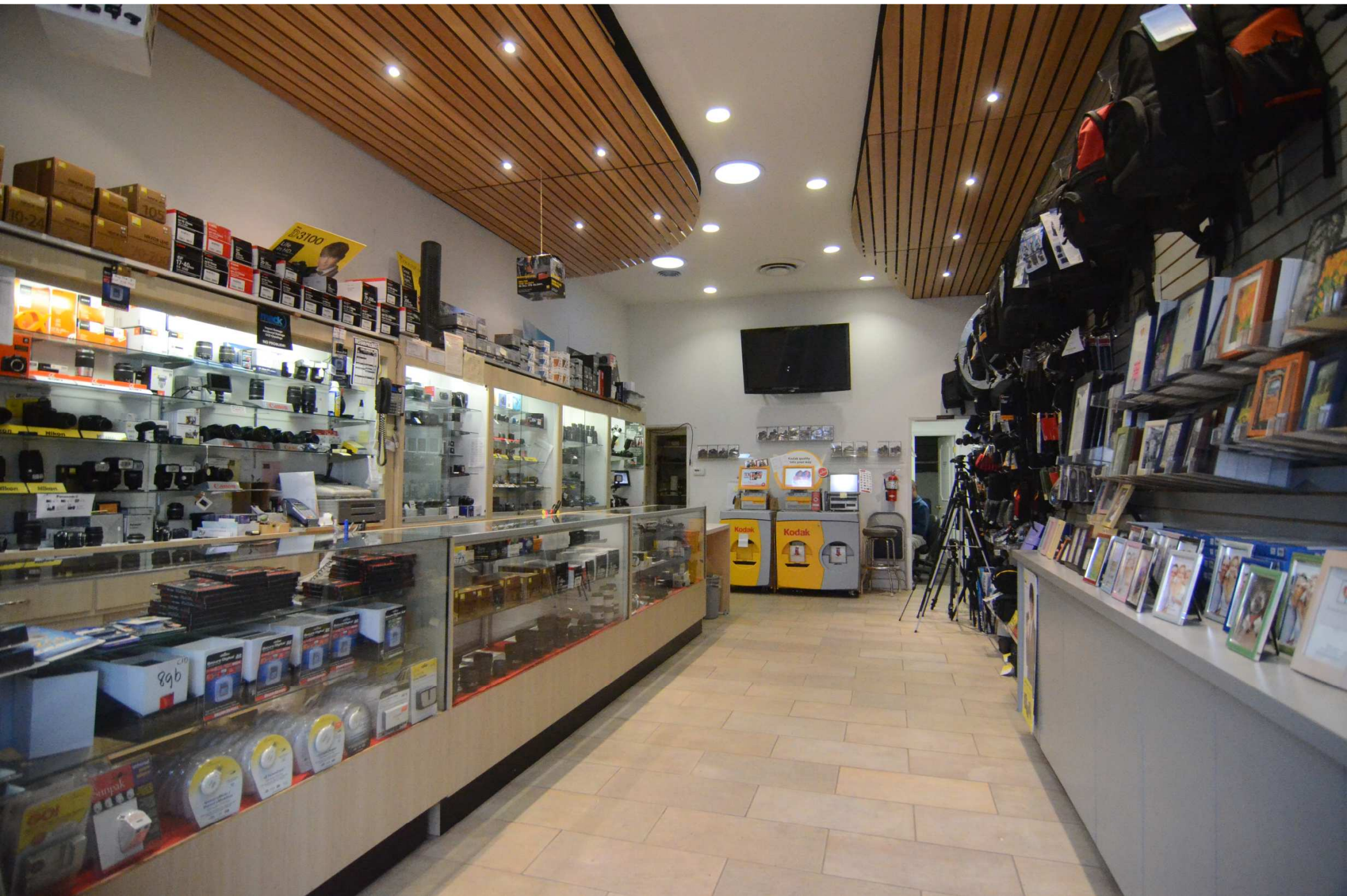
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### Gift Guide: Chestnut Street

Lauren Murrow | Photo: Courtesy of the stores listed | November 29, 2013

Between Steiner St. and Pierce St.



Sony Action Cam, \$270  
at Fireside Camera  
(2117 Chestnut St., 415-567-8131)

Though Union Street may be overrun with spandex and fresh-from-campus fashion, this Marina strip is a layup for kids—four tot stores on a single block—tech gadgets, and party fare at [Lucca Deli](http://luccadeli.com/) (<http://luccadeli.com/>) and [SusieCakes](https://www.susiecakes.com/) (<https://www.susiecakes.com/>).

- [#1—Temescal Alley](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-temescal-alley) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-temescal-alley>)
- [#2—Valencia Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-valencia-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-valencia-street>)
- [#3—Hayes Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-hayes-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-hayes-street>)
- [#4—Fourth Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-fourth-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-fourth-street>)
- [#5—Fillmore Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-fillmore-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-fillmore-street>)
- [#6—Maiden Lane](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-maiden-lane) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-maiden-lane>)
- [#7—Chestnut Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-chestnut-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-chestnut-street>)
- [#8—Grant Avenue](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-grant-avenue) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-grant-avenue>)
- [#9—Haight Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-haight-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-haight-street>)
- [#10—24th Street](http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-24th-street) (<http://modernluxury.com/san-francisco/story/gift-guide-24th-street>)

Originally published in the November 2013 issue of San Francisco

Have feedback? Email us at [letterssf@modernluxury.com](mailto:letterssf@modernluxury.com) (<mailto:letterssf@modernluxury.com>)  
Email Lauren Murrow at [lmurrow@sanfrancisco.com](mailto:lmurrow@sanfrancisco.com) (<mailto:lmurrow@sanfrancisco.com>)  
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### Scene In...



<http://san-francisco.com/scene/sf-operas-gotterdammerung-cast-party/>  
**SF Opera's Gotterdammerung & Cast Party**  
<http://san-francisco.com/scene/sf-operas-gotterdammerung-cast-party/>  
[See All Photos >>](#) (<http://san-francisco.com/scene/sf-operas-gotterdammerung-cast-party/>)

### Now Playing



<http://san-francisco.com/videos/power-party/>

Visit  
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GREAT DEALS!

# Tax-Free Christmas Sale!

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Tax-Free promotion cannot be combined  
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Since 1954

## Fireside Camera

[www.firesidecamera.com](http://www.firesidecamera.com)

2117 Chestnut St. | San Francisco, CA 94123

415.567.8131 | Mon-Fri: 9:30a-6:30p/Sat: 10a-6p/Sun: 10a-5p

Christmas Eve: 9:30a-4p/Closed Christmas Day

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# LAST CHANCE TO SAVE BIG

**SALE ENDS  
JULY 29th**

## STAND-ALONE LENS INSTANT SAVINGS

NO CAMERA PURCHASE REQUIRED ON THESE SELECT NIKKOR® LENSES

### NIKKOR® LENSES—UNRIVALED EXCELLENCE.



**AF-S DX NIKKOR®  
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**\$169<sup>95</sup>**

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**AF-S NIKKOR®  
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Image Stabilizing Lens**

For years, Nikon's 70-200 f/2.8 lens has been the benchmark for fast telephoto zoom lenses, unrivaled for low-light, sports, wildlife, concerts, weddings, portraits and everyday shooting. Whether you're shooting a DX DSLR like the D500 or an FX powerhouse like the D5, the AF-S NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8E FL ED VR will take you to thrilling new heights.

**\$2599<sup>95</sup>**

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### An exciting new wide-angle NIKKOR® lens



**AF-P DX NIKKOR®  
10-20mm f/4.5-5.6G VR**

**\$319<sup>95</sup>**

To truly capture the feeling of a place, you need a lens wide enough to see the entire scene. Enter the AF-P DX NIKKOR 10-20mm f/4.5-5.6G VR—an ultra-wide-angle zoom lens that's ideal for sprawling landscapes and cityscapes, architecture, interiors or just beautiful group photos. Its near-silent autofocus and Vibration Reduction (VR) image stabilization make it a great choice for recording video, and its compact, lightweight design makes it a great travel companion.

Since 1954

# Fireside Camera

[www.firesidecamera.com](http://www.firesidecamera.com)

**2117 Chestnut St  
San Francisco, CA 94123  
415.567.8131**

Mon-Fri: 9:30-6:30 / Sat: 10-6 / Sun: 10-5

■ Nikon Authorized Dealer

\*\* Instant Savings valid July 8, 2017 through July 29, 2017. All prices are suggested retail price. Actual selling offer is determined by each dealer at the time of sale. All prices and specifications are subject to change without notice. Instant Savings Offer does not apply to any used, refurbished or reconditioned products. All Nikon products include Nikon Inc. USA limited warranty. ©2017 Nikon Inc.



At the heart of the image.

# HUGE CAMERA SALE!

Come help Fireside Camera Celebrate  
our 63rd Year of business in  
San Francisco's Marina District!

Great Deals on Sony, Nikon, Fuji, Canon,  
Panasonic, Olympus, Tamron and Manfrotto!

***Hurry, Sale Ends 5/13/17***





INSIGHT  GUIDES

# SAN FRANCISCO

## CITY GUIDE



**Stunning  
photography**

**In-depth features  
on history and culture**

**Detailed  
maps**

## Opening Hours

Shopping hours differ from one neighborhood to another. In Union Square and Fisherman's Wharf, business hours are 9am–6pm, seven days a week, with extended hours at night for the larger chains. Smaller boutique shops in surrounding areas may open as late as noon and close as late as 9pm. Banking hours vary; some branches offer a Saturday service.

## P

## Photography

Many museums and galleries do not allow pictures, and flash photography is seen as rude and disruptive during public performances. The use of tripods is also restricted in many public places.

For photographic equipment or services in the downtown area, avoid the shops along Grant and Kearny. **Fireside** Camera in the Marina (2117 Chestnut Street; tel: 415-567-8131) sells all the major camera brands, as well as offering digital print services and camera supplies.

## Postal Services

The **United States Post Office General Mail Facility** is located far away at 1300 Evans Avenue, tel: 415-550-5001. Many of the city's 50 postal stations are open for extended hours on weekdays and limited hours on Saturday. For current postal rates and other information, visit [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

You can have mail addressed to you care of "General Delivery" at the post office of your choice. You will need the zip code of the station and you must pick your mail up in person.

Stamps may be purchased from the post office or from vending machines in hotels, stores, supermarkets, transportation terminals, and the post office.

The Art Deco **Rincon Center Post Office**, 180 Steuart Street, is the jewel of the city's postal history, with beautiful murals and a philatelic center. The building makes "doing the mail" a pleasant experience. Stop in to take a picture and send a postcard.

## Public Holidays

Most banks, post offices, government buildings, and some large businesses are closed on the following major holidays:

**New Year's Day:** January 1.

**Martin Luther King's Birthday:** January 15.

**Presidents' Day:** third Monday in February.

**Memorial Day:** last Monday in May.

**Independence Day:** July 4.

**Labor Day:** first Monday in September.

*Filing Date:* September 19, 2018  
*Case No.:* 2018-013141LBR  
*Business Name:* Fireside Camera  
*Business Address:* 2117 Chestnut Street  
*Zoning:* NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale)  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 0490/047  
*Applicant:* Spencer Pon, CFO  
3630 Balboa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Catherine Stefani, District 2  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822  
tim.frye@sfgov.org

## BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Fireside Camera was founded in 1954 by William and Egon Fireside as an independent photo store in the Marina District. For 40+ years, Egon Fireside photographed many of San Francisco's elite, specializing in weddings, portraits, and event photography and becoming one of San Francisco's most renowned wedding photographers.

In the 1970s, photography became more commonplace and people took more of their own family pictures, so Fireside Studios evolved and added retail to its services. This change was reflected in the name which changed to Fireside Camera. Fireside Camera was one of the first importers of Olympus cameras. As retail became a larger and larger part of the business, sales people were hired, including Jack Shim in 1976, Edmond Lee in 1983, and Spencer Pon in 1984. At the turn of the century, Egon and his wife Lucy decided to retire and offered the store to Shim, Lee and Pon, who purchased the business and are the current owners. Under their ownership, the business has kept alive the "service first" attitude that made Fireside Camera the destination for all of San Francisco's photographic needs.

The business is located on the southwest corner of Chestnut and Steiner streets in the Marina District. It is within a NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

### *Review Criteria*

8. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1954.

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

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



- iv. Fireside Camera has operated continuously in San Francisco for 64 years.
- v. Fireside Camera has contributed to the history and identity of San Francisco by serving as a photograph and camera store.
- vi. Fireside Camera is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

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

Yes. The business is associated with the art of photography.

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

No.

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

No. The property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status of "B" (Properties Requiring Further Consultation and Review) as the building was constructed in 1928 and has not been formally evaluated.

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

No. However, the property was included in the Neighborhood Commercial Buildings Historic Resource Survey conducted by the Planning Department in the summers of 2014 and 2015, and it was found not to be architecturally significant for its storefront.

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

Yes. Fireside Camera has consistently been one of the highest rated camera stores in San Francisco on YELP.

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

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

- 2117 Chestnut Street

#### **Recommended by Applicant**

- Selection of new and used camera equipment
- Film processing and digital printing services
- Signage
- Cabinets originally bought by the Firesides

#### **Additional Recommended by Staff**

- None





# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No. ###

HEARING DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2018

*Case No.:* 2018-013141LBR  
*Business Name:* Fireside Camera  
*Business Address:* 2117 Chestnut Street  
*Zoning:* NC-2 (Neighborhood Commercial, Small Scale)  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 0490/047  
*Applicant:* Spencer Pon, CFO  
3630 Balboa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Catherine Stefani, District 2  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822  
tim.frye@sfgov.org

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

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR FIRESIDE CAMERA CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 2117 CHESTNUT STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 0490/047).**

**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 October 17, 2018, 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 Fireside Camera 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 Fireside Camera.

***Location(s):***

- *2117 Chestnut Street*

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

- *Selection of new and used camera equipment*
- *Film processing and digital printing services*
- *Signage*
- *Cabinets originally bought by the Firesides*

**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 2018-013141LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on October 17, 2018.

Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: