



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: February 26, 2024

R&G LOUNGE

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-026
Business Name: R&G Lounge
Business Address: 631 Kearny St.
District: District 3
Applicant: Chelsea Hung, Owner and Manager
Nomination Date: January 23, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

R&G Lounge is a Chinese restaurant serving authentic Cantonese cuisine. The business is known for their salt & pepper crab, R&G special beef, and lychee martinis. It is one of a few Chinese banquet places that remains in Chinatown. Banquets are often hosted by community organizations in addition to families celebrating important milestones like birthdays and weddings.

The business was founded by Henry Hung and Kinson Wong in 1985. Henry Hung emigrated from China and worked as a contractor before saving up enough money to start his own construction company. R&G Lounge was the first restaurant he opened. He has since opened five other restaurants throughout the Bay Area. Joe Ling joined the business as a co-owner in 1996. In 1998, the business expanded to occupy three stories in the building. Originally, the restaurant only occupied one story in the basement. A full bar and three VIP private rooms were added during this period. Kinson Wong left R&G Lounge in 2018 to start his own business. Joe Ling retired in 2021 and Chelsea Hung, Henry Hung's daughter, joined the business as co-owner.

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, R&G Lounge has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

631 Kearny St. from 1985 to Present (39 years)

CRITERION 2

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

Yes, R&G Lounge has contributed to the history and identity of the Chinatown neighborhood and San Francisco.

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

- The business is associated with traditional Cantonese cuisine.

Legacy Business Program

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





- R&G Lounge has hosted many celebrities. Anthony Bourdain, Michael Mina, Padma Lakshmi, and Ali Wong – some of the very best in the business – have all visited R&G Lounge and reported on the restaurant. Many leaders in San Francisco including several mayors (Willie Brown, Edwin Lee, and London Breed) have dined at the establishment.
- The property is within the boundaries of the California Register-eligible and National Register-eligible Chinatown Historic District.
- R&G Lounge was featured in the television shows “Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations” and “Taste the Nation with Padma Lakshmi”. The business has been featured in the San Francisco Chronicle, Travel + Leisure, SF Tourism Tips, Gayot, SF Travel, Eater San Francisco, Bustle, Timeout, Conde Nast Traveler, SFist, and various media outlets.
- R&G Lounge received a Certificate of Honor from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 2018; Michelin Guide from 2008 to 2017; Recognition of Outstanding Service & Dedication to the Community from Fiona Ma (Member of the California Board of Equalization) in 2018; Choice Award from Trip Experts in 2023; and Chinese Classics Restaurateur Awards in 2023.
- With regard to racial and social equity, R&G Lounge is an immigrant, minority, and woman owned business. The business is community-oriented, supports events and charities, employs local residents, and sources from local vendors. The business has donated to nonprofit organizations including Chinatown Community Children’s Center, San Francisco Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Chinatown Community Development Center, Chinese Hospital, Chinese Historical Society of America, Chinese Newcomers Service Center, American Orient Performing Arts, and other organizations.

CRITERION 3

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

Yes, R&G Lounge is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that R&G Lounge qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Restaurant featuring Cantonese cuisine.
- Projecting sign with restaurant’s logo.

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Restaurant featuring Chinese cuisine.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include R&G Lounge currently located at 631 Kearny St. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

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





Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

February 26, 2024

R&G LOUNGE

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-026
Business Name: R&G Lounge
Business Address: 631 Kearny St.
District: District 3
Applicant: Chelsea Hung, Owner and Manager
Nomination Date: January 23, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for R&G Lounge, currently located at 631 Kearny St.

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 26, 2024, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes R&G Lounge 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 R&G Lounge.

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





Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Restaurant featuring Cantonese cuisine.
- Projecting sign with restaurant's logo.

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

- Restaurant featuring Chinese cuisine.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 26, 2024.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

- Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

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





Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2023-24-026
Business Name: R&G Lounge
Business Address: 631 Kearny St.
District: District 3
Applicant: Chelsea Hung, Owner and Manager
Nomination Date: January 23, 2024
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin

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

Yes No

631 Kearny St. from 1985 to Present (39 years)

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

Yes No

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

Yes No

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: January 24, 2024

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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



**City and County of
San Francisco**



**President, Board of
Supervisors**

AARON PESKIN
市參事 佩斯金

January 23, 2024

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

Dear Director Tang,

I write to nominate R&G Lounge, located at 631 Kearny St., for inclusion in the San Francisco Legacy Business Registry.

R&G Lounge has been a San Francisco and Chinatown institution since 1985 with their famed blend of traditional Cantonese cuisine and modern aesthetic appeal. The restaurant has been recognized by countless media outlets, including The San Francisco Chronicle, CNN, and NBC Bay Area. Most notably, the restaurant was featured on Travel Channel's Emmy Award-winning series, *No Reservation*, where celebrity chef Anthony Bourdin praised them for their addictive salt and pepper crabs and lychee martinis.

R&G Lounge is a bastion of Chinatown traditions, values, and identity. The restaurant employs local residents, sources food from neighborhood grocery stores, and often sponsors community charities and events. It is a prime location for Chinese American families to gather over dinner and a popular lunch destination for local nonprofits to host staff events and fundraisers.

Today, the restaurant is owned and managed by daughter and father duo – Chelsea and Henry Hung, who are active members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and longtime advocates for the immigrant business community, as well as low-income seniors and families in Chinatown.

R&G Lounge would greatly benefit from being added to the Legacy Business Registry, and it is my honor to nominate them for inclusion.

Sincerely,

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

Aaron Peskin



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: R&G Lounge

Business owner name(s): Henry Hung, Chelsea Hung

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

Current business address: 631 Kearny St., San Francisco, CA 94108

Telephone: (415) 982 - 7877 Email: info@rnglounge.com

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: www.rnglounge.com

Facebook: Twitter:

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 9 1 1 8 2 0

Do any of these describe your business? (select all that apply)
Requires at least 51% of the business be owned, operated, and controlled by the business designation below.

- Immigrant-Owned Business
- LGBTQ+-Owned Business
- Minority-Owned Business*
- Owned by Person with a Disability
- Veteran-Owned Business
- Woman-Owned Business

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

Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Chelsea Hung

Contact person title: Owner and Manager

Contact telephone: (415) 982 - 7877 Contact email: chelsea@rnglounge.com

Business Location(s)

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business.

If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Applicant Disclosures

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

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

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

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

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

Name: Chelsea Hung

Signature:



Date: 08/24/2023

R&G LOUNGE

Written Historical Narrative

INTRODUCTION

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

R&G Lounge, an iconic Chinese restaurant in San Francisco, began in 1985 as a single-story establishment and later expanded to three stories. The business celebrates Chinese heritage through an iconic brand, traditional food, and genuine excellence. R&G's reputation across the world has been built on the excellent and authentic Chinese cuisine they serve thanks to the high-quality ingredients they use. With over 150 dishes on the menu, they are particularly renowned for their Salt & Pepper Crab, R&G Special Beef, Lychee Martinis, and many other delectable offerings.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

R&G Lounge have a diverse range of customers, including tourists, locals, and Chinese patrons. They are one of the very few authentic Chinese restaurants whose brand and food resonates with a diverse spectrum of patrons. Cantonese cuisine, often underrated and complex, deserves recognition, and R&G Lounge is proud to represent their hardworking team, San Francisco, and Chinatown.

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

Signature Salt & Pepper Crab.

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

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

R&G Lounge, an iconic Chinese restaurant in San Francisco, was established in 1985 as a single-story establishment at 631 Kearny Street in Chinatown. The founders of the business were Henry Hung and Kinson Wong.

Henry Hung is an immigrant from China who came to America with barely anything to pursue the "American dream." He started out as a contractor and saved enough money to open his own construction company. He opened up his first restaurant, R&G Lounge, in 1985 and has since opened five other restaurants throughout the Bay Area.

No information is available regarding Kinson Wong.

In 1996, Joe Ling joined the business as a co-owner. No information is available regarding Joe Ling.

Sometime around 1998, the business expanded to three stories, including a full bar and three spacious VIP private rooms.

In 2018, Kinson Wong (left the business to start another business.

In 2021, Joe Ling retired, and Henry Hung's daughter Chelsea Hung joined the business as a co-owner to carry on the legacy as the second generation.

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

1985 to 1996:	Henry Hung, Kinson Wong
1996 to 2018:	Henry Hung, Kinson Wong, Joe Ling
2018 to 2021:	Henry Hung, Joe Ling
2021 to Present:	Henry Hung, Chelsea Hung

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

R&G Lounge had to close for 2-3 months during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

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

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

R&G Lounge's contribution to, and reputation throughout, the Bay Area has been built upon the excellent and authentic Chinese cuisine they offer. R&G Lounge started out as a modest one-story restaurant in the basement level and has expanded to three dining room floors, including a full bar and three spacious VIP private rooms. While the restaurant has grown in size, they have maintained their focus on excellent food quality by only using high quality and fresh ingredients. Some of their most popular dishes are the Salt & Pepper Crab and R&G Special Beef. The restaurant has a wide range of options to choose from for everyone's taste.

R&G Lounge holds many small banquets for community organizations and events. There are currently very few Chinese banquet places remaining in Chinatown.

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

R&G Lounge is known the world over. Anthony Bourdain, Michael Mina, Padma Lakshmi, and Ali Wong – some of the very best in the business – have all visited R&G Lounge and reported on the restaurant. Many leaders in San Francisco including several mayors (Willie Brown, Edwin Lee, and London Breed) have dined at the establishment.

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

Since R&G Lounge opened in 1985, they have played a vital role in the Chinatown community by supporting events and charities, addressing food insecurity, employing local residents, and sourcing from local vendors. R&G donated a generous amount each year to many nonprofit organizations including Chinatown Community Children's Center, San Francisco Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Chinatown Community Development Center, Chinese Hospital, Chinese Historical Society of America, Chinese Newcomers Service Center, American Orient Performing Arts, and many other organizations.

Co-owner Henry Hung had served on the board of Chinese Chamber of Commerce for 15+ years. Co-owner Chelsea Hung is currently on the Board of Supervisors of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and is the youngest member. She has also volunteered over 100 hours per year for their events and the community.

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

R&G Lounge has been featured in more than 30 articles as one of the best Chinese restaurants in the Bay Area. They have also been included on the Michelin Guide recommended list as well as written up in many food and travel magazines.

Some of their biggest media features is with Anthony Bourdain's show No Reservations and Padma Lakshmi's Taste the Nation. Following is a list of several key publications:

- *Top Chinese Restaurants in the Bay Area*
San Francisco Chronicle
August 28, 2023
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/best-chinese-restaurants-sf-bay-area/>
- *8 Best Places to Eat, Drink, and Shop in San Francisco's Chinatown, According to Local Experts*
Travel + Leisure
August 4, 2023
<https://www.travelandleisure.com/local-guide-to-san-francisco-chinatown-7568648>
- *Chinese Restaurants in San Francisco: My 10 Favorites*
SF Tourism Tips
January 3, 2023
<https://www.sftourismtips.com/chinese-restaurants-in-san-francisco.html>
- *Best Chinese Restaurants in San Francisco/Bay Area*
Gayot
2023
https://www.gayot.com/restaurants/best-sanfrancisco-ca-top10-chineserestaurant_3sf.html

- *Best Chinese Restaurants in San Francisco by Neighborhood*
 SF Travel
 2023
<https://www.sftravel.com/article/best-chinese-restaurants-san-francisco-neighborhood>
- *Where to Feast on Dungeness Crab in the Bay Area*
 Eater San Francisco
 December 8, 2021
<https://sf.eater.com/maps/best-dungeness-crab-restaurants-san-francisco>
- *The Best Day Ever in Chinatown*
 San Francisco Chronicle
 August 25, 2021
https://www.sfchronicle.com/projects/2021/chinatown-food-best-day-ever/?utm_campaign=later-linkinbio-sfchronicle_food&utm_content=later-20073233&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkin.bio
- *All The Restaurants You Can Visit From Padma Lakshmi's 'Taste The Nation'*
 Bustle
 June 17, 2020
<https://www.bustle.com/p/all-the-taste-the-nation-restaurants-that-you-can-visit-after-watching-the-show-22985873>
- *The best Chinese restaurants in San Francisco*
 Timeout
 December 18, 2018
<https://www.timeout.com/san-francisco/restaurants/the-best-chinese-restaurants-in-san-francisco>
- *15 Best Places for Chinese Food in San Francisco*
 Condé Nast Traveler
 March 4, 2018
<https://www.cntraveler.com/gallery/best-chinese-food-in-san-francisco>
- *The 15 Best Chinese Restaurants In SF*
 SFist
 June 15, 2017
https://sfist.com/2017/06/15/best_chinese_restaurants_in_sf/
- 中餐美食地图 美国：风靡旧金山的“中国味道”
 (*Chinese Food Map United States: The “Taste of China” Popular in San Francisco*)
 CCTV.com
 February 8, 2016
<https://tv.cctv.com/2016/02/08/VIDEcr89oK0YIK8ysr5AsTRs160208.shtml?spm=C53156045404.PKXC0xLPAnP9.0.0>

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

R&G Lounge has received the following awards, recognition, and commendations:

- Michelin Guide, 2008-2017
- Certificate of Honor, San Francisco Board of Supervisors, 2018
- Recognition of Outstanding Service & Dedication to the Community, Fiona Ma (Member of the California Board of Equalization) and the Chinese Restaurant Foundation and Chinese Restaurant News, 2018
- Choice Award, Trip Experts, 2023
- Chinese Classics Restaurateur Awards, 2023

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

R&G Lounge is an iconic establishment in San Francisco and one of the key businesses in Chinatown. The community would be hurt if R&G were to be sold, relocated, or shut down. Generations of families have been eating at this establishment and celebrating their milestones from birthdays to weddings. There have been more than three decades of memories and opportunities at this establishment. It also employs over 60 people and spends a significant amount at local vendors.

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

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

The R&G Lounge logo is a defining feature of the business:



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

R&G Lounge is committed to remaining a restaurant serving quality authentic Cantonese cuisine.

c. What challenges is the business facing today?

R&G Lounge is still recovering from their loss and challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic as well as facing many safety challenges. A big part of their business relies on tourists, and there have been noticeably fewer tourists since 2020. With many crimes and car vandalism in San Francisco, specifically Chinatown, many people have been too worried to come to the neighborhood. Since the 2020s, the business has had to deal with the safety and cleanliness of the street. They have had criminals inside and outside of the restaurant, other's garbage thrown in front of the store, unhoused loitering in front of the restaurant, dine and dashers, etc. They hope the city can become a clean and safe place again while holding criminals accountable so that people feel safe to come to San Francisco and Chinatown again.

Legacy Business Program staff will add the following details:

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

Restaurant featuring Chinese cuisine.

b. Other special features of the business location, such as if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The Planning Department Historic Resource Status of the building at 631-633 Kearny Street is "A - Historic Resource Present." The building is located within the Eligible Chinatown Historic District.



yornmeister

700

Portsmouth Square
Golden Gateway

Commercial

ONE WAY

R & G
Lounge
Lunch · Dinner
嶺南小館

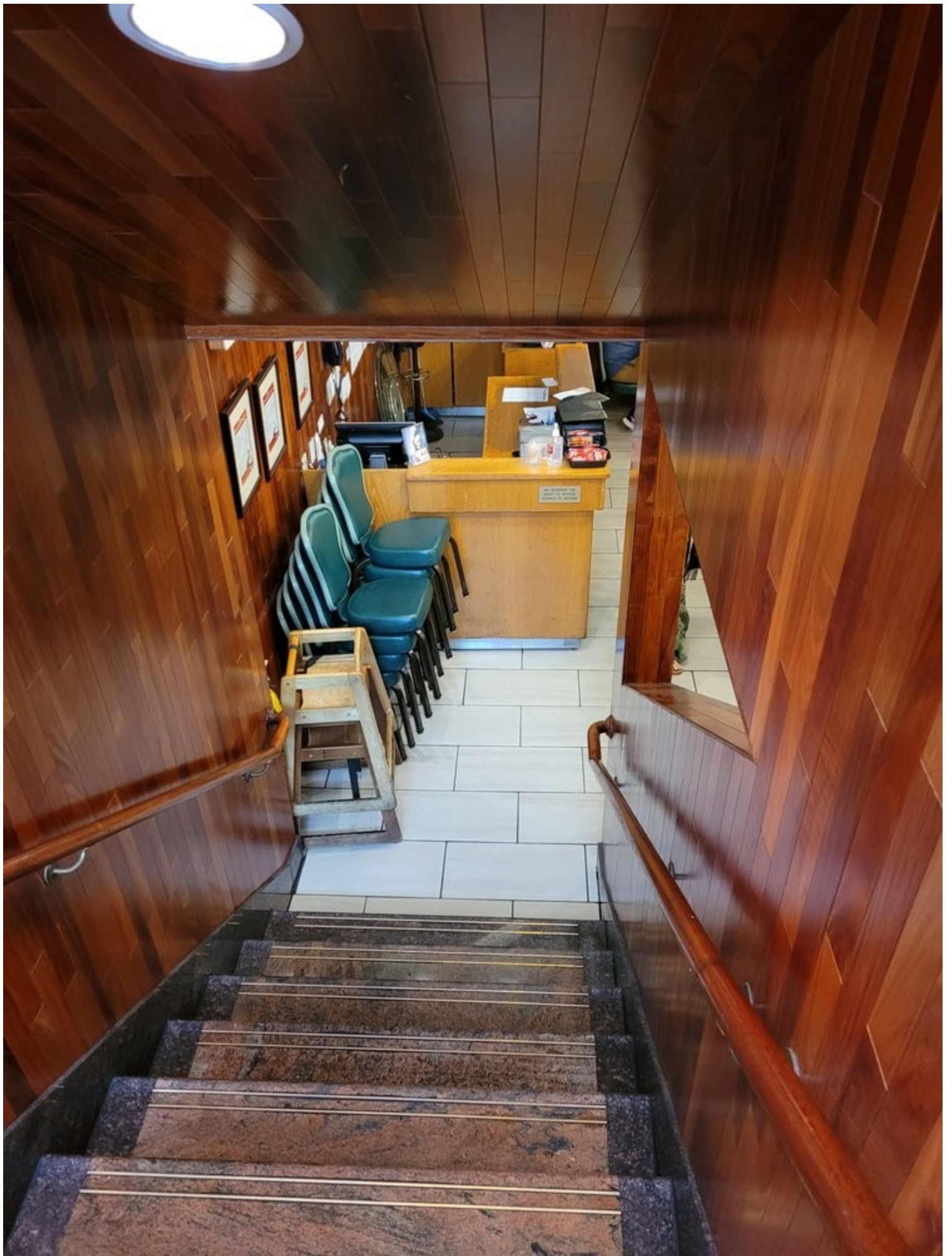
OPEN

SCHOOL

NO PARKING
2am - 6am
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY



















Tasting Anthony Bourdain's San Francisco Crab Recommendation

Bay Area foodie reviews R&G Lounge

By MARIAM HOSSEINI • Published February 15, 2011 • Updated on February 15, 2011 at 10:45 am



If you asked me to name my favorite Chinese restaurant in the [Bay Area](#), I'd be at a loss. There's just too much good Chinese food to name one.

But my top three? R&G Lounge in [Chinatown](#) forever holds a place in the ranking, and these days, the word is out.

Ever since I heard about the salt and pepper crab from a friend who'd dined there, I'd been intrigued. Then [Anthony Bourdain](#) featured the crab dish in his [San Francisco](#) episode of "No Reservations." By the time I finally paid R&G my first visit to try their famed crustacean dish, the restaurant was packed, and with good reason.

My dining companions and I were quickly seated for lunch in the upstairs dining area (there's an underground dining room as well). Service was brisk and the dishes we ordered emerged quickly from the kitchen. The first was the salt and pepper crab, of course. Deep fried and other wordily-looking, this Dungeness beauty was generously sprinkled with loads of fried garlic, which coated the crab meat as we pried open the claws. The hype is worth it – this crab is among the best I've ever had.

Next came the Mongolian beef, one of my favorite Chinese-American dishes. This was spicy, peppery, and the tender beef was seared well. Oh, and lots of onions.

As tempting as it is, it's no good to order all meat, so we split a dish of bok choy with garlic as well. I'm not sure what was in the translucent sauce, but it was full of savory flavor, lending a hearty note to our supposed "light" dish. Not that I'm complaining.

We shared plate of seafood fried rice too, which was also tasty. My favorite thing about this fried rice is that it was far less greasy than your usual restaurant rendition of fried rice, and with extra bits of yolk mixed in.

I've been back to R&G Lounge several times since my first visit. A few regular dishes have grown on me in addition to the crab; namely the R&G special beef, the braised e-fu noodles, and the three treasures with black bean sauce. Now when I go to R&G Lounge, my biggest challenge isn't sitting through the wait – it's narrowing down what to order.

Mariam Hosseini is a [Bay Area](#) native who has been writing about food and travel for six years. She blogs regularly at [yogurtsoda.com](#).



<https://www.cntraveler.com/restaurants/san-francisco/randg-lounge>

Condé Nast
Traveler

REVIEW:

R&G Lounge

All of its Cantonese-style food is delicious, but R&G is renowned for its salt and pepper crab.

CUISINE
Chinese

Reviewed by [LEXI PANDELL](#)



Soraya Matos



Soraya Matos

Tell us about your first impressions when you arrived.

From the outside, it's hard to get a sense of R&G—the facade is spare and softly lit. From the door, you can glimpse a full bar with a TV playing overhead, plus the host waiting to welcome diners. Step inside, though, and you'll be whisked to the bustling basement dining room, large and almost always packed with diners. A San Francisco favorite for decades, this massive restaurant can seat hundreds.

What was the crowd like?

Despite the white linen tableclothes and green leather chairs, patrons are casually dressed, and represent a mix of locals, tourists, and groups sharing towering plates of the famous crab. While you wouldn't feel out of place in jeans and a nice t-shirt, you still should make a reservation. Otherwise, expect to wait; you can grab a drink at the bar upstairs while you do.

What should we be drinking?

R&G has a full bar, of which the lychee martini is the star. It's sweet, but deceptively boozy, so sip with caution.

Main event: the food. Give us the lowdown—especially what not to miss.

All of the Cantonese-style food is delicious, but R&G is renowned for its salt and pepper crab. It's market price and can be expensive, but part of the reason for your visit. Get a few orders to share with a small group. Chefs pull the crabs fresh from a tank, chops them up into manageable pieces, and fry them in-shell, seasoned with salt and pepper. The resulting meat is tender and perfectly cooked, and the batter lends additional flavor.

Also try their baked black cod, which comes in a delicious glaze, or the steamed clams with eggs, a custard variation with fresh clams. If you ask in advance, the kitchen will even whip you up some off-menu lo mei gai, a fried, boneless cut of chicken stuffed with sausage, vegetables, and rice.

And how did the front-of-house folks treat you?

The service is prompt and friendly enough, but the staff may hurry you along during peak hours. Your check will land almost as soon as you've finished your meal. If you want to get on their good side, come ready to order.

What's the real-real on why we're coming here?

This is one of the best places in the city for fried crab, and because of the experiential aspect of eating there, it's popular for locals to bring visiting from out of town.

R&G Lounge Video



**R and G Lounge: (Travel Channel – Anthony Bourdain
No Reservations San Francisco)**

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2pw19z>

Published 2014

The Restaurateur Awards
2023
第一届餐饮家金像奖
经典中餐厅
Chinese Classics

岭南小馆

R&G Lounge



餐飲家
The Restaurateur

*餐饮家金像奖由 MenuSifu 菜单大师 首席赞助
The Restaurateur Awards are Presented by MenuSifu.



经典中餐厅的菜单上第一道、第一道传统菜就是烧乳猪。烧乳猪是粤菜中非常受欢迎的一道菜，也是广东人宴请宾客时的必备之选。烧乳猪的皮脆肉嫩，吃起来别有风味。这道菜的制作工艺非常讲究，需要经过多道工序才能完成。烧乳猪的皮要烤得酥脆，肉要煮得恰到好处。这道菜不仅是一道美食，更是一种文化的传承。

烧乳猪的制作工艺非常讲究，需要经过多道工序才能完成。烧乳猪的皮要烤得酥脆，肉要煮得恰到好处。这道菜不仅是一道美食，更是一种文化的传承。

烧乳猪的制作工艺非常讲究，需要经过多道工序才能完成。烧乳猪的皮要烤得酥脆，肉要煮得恰到好处。这道菜不仅是一道美食，更是一种文化的传承。



40
The Restaurateur 2023




“瑶柱的吊腩”也是点菜率很高的一道菜。



Congratulations! R&G Lounge has won a 2023 Experts' Choice Award.

Experts' Choice is the only industry accolade based on professional reviews. We draw from 100+ publications including leading travel guides, magazines and newspapers. The award, now in its seventh year, has received coverage in major outlets including *The New York Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *GQ*.

[Learn more about the awards →](#)

The award recognizes R&G Lounge as one of the highest rated restaurants in San Francisco. Fewer than 2% of businesses receive an award.



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2024

Filing Date: January 24, 2024
Case No.: 2024-000784LBR
Business Name: 631 Kearny Street
Business Address: R&G Lounge
Zoning: CCB (CHINATOWN-COMMUNITY BUSINESS) Zoning District
50-N Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: Not Applicable
Block/Lot: 0226/002
Applicant: Henry and Chelsea Hung
631 Kearny Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Maggie Dong - 628.652.7426
Maggie.Dong@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

R&G Lounge is a Chinese restaurant serving authentic Cantonese cuisine. The business is known for their salt & pepper crab, R&G special beef, and lychee martinis. It is one of a few Chinese banquet places that remains in Chinatown. Banquets are often hosted by community organizations in addition to families celebrating important milestones like birthdays and weddings.

The business was founded by Henry Hung and Kinson Wong in 1985. Henry Hung immigrated from China and worked as a contractor before saving up enough money to start his own construction company. R&G Lounge was the first restaurant he opened. He has since opened five other restaurants throughout the Bay Area. Joe Ling joined the business as a co-owner in 1996. In 1998, the business expanded to occupy three stories in the building. Originally, the restaurant only occupied one story in the basement. A full bar and three VIP private rooms were added during this period. Kinson Wong left R&G Lounge in 2018 to start his own business. Joe Ling retired in 2021 and Chelsea Hung, Henry Hung's daughter, joined the business as co-owner.

The business's location at 631 Kearny Street is a Category A (Historic Resource Present) structure on the northwest corner of Kearny and Commercial Streets in the Chinatown neighborhood. It is within the Chinatown Community Business Zoning District; 50-N Height and Bulk District; Group Housing Special Use District; and Priority Equity Geographies Special Use District. It is located within the California Register-eligible and National Register-eligible Chinatown Historic District.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. When was business founded?

The business was founded in 1985.

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

Yes. R&G Lounge qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. R&G Lounge has operated continuously in San Francisco for 39 years.
- b. R&G Lounge has contributed to the history and identity of the Chinatown neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. R&G Lounge is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

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

Yes. The business is associated with traditional Cantonese cuisine.

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

No; however, R&G Lounge has hosted many celebrities. Anthony Bourdain, Michael Mina, Padma Lakshmi, and Ali Wong – some of the very best in the business – have all visited R&G Lounge and reported on the restaurant. Many leaders in San Francisco including several mayors (Willie Brown, Edwin Lee, and London Breed) have dined at the establishment.

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

Yes. The property is within the boundaries of the California Register-eligible and National Register-eligible Chinatown Historic District.

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

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary.

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

Yes. R&G Lounge was featured in the television shows “Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations” and “Taste the Nation with Padma Lakshmi”. The business has been featured in the San Francisco Chronicle, Travel + Leisure,

SF Tourism Tips, Gayot, SF Travel, Eater San Francisco, Bustle, Timeout, Conde Nast Traveler, SFist, and various media outlets. R&G Lounge received a Certificate of Honor from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 2018; Michelin Guide from 2008 to 2017; Recognition of Outstanding Service & Dedication to the Community from Fiona Ma (Member of the California Board of Equalization) in 2018; Choice Award from Trip Experts in 2023; and Chinese Classics Restaurateur Awards in 2023.

Racial and Social Equity Analysis

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

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

R&G Lounge is an immigrant, minority, and woman-owned business. The business is community-oriented, supports events and charities, employs local residents, and sources from local vendors. The business has donated to nonprofit organizations including Chinatown Community Children's Center, San Francisco Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Chinatown Community Development Center, Chinese Hospital, Chinese Historical Society of America, Chinese Newcomers Service Center, American Orient Performing Arts, and other organizations.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 631 Kearny Street (1985 – Present)

Recommended by Applicant

- Restaurant featuring Cantonese cuisine
- Projecting sign with restaurant's logo

Additional Recommended by Staff

- None

Basis for Recommendation

The Department recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending the business listed above be adopted by the Small Business Commission to the Legacy Business Registry.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Resolution

Legacy Business Registry Application:

- Application Review Sheet
- Section 1 – Business / Applicant Information
- Section 2 – Business Location(s)
- Section 3 – Disclosure Statement
- Section 4 – Written Historical Narrative
 - Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business
 - Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
 - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1383

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 21, 2024

Case No.: 2024-000784LBR
Business Name: R&G Lounge
Business Address: 631 Kearny Street
Zoning: CCB (CHINATOWN-COMMUNITY BUSINESS) Zoning District
50-N Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0226/002
Applicant: Henry and Chelsea Hung
Nominated By: Supervisor Peskin
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Maggie Dong - 628.652.7426
Maggie.Dong@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR R&G LOUNGE CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 631 KEARNY ST, BLOCK/LOT 0226/002.

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 February 21, 2024, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that R&G Lounge 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 R&G Lounge.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

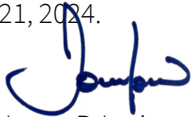
- 631 Kearny Street (1985 – Present)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Restaurant featuring Cantonese cuisine
- Projecting sign with restaurant’s logo

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file to the Office of Small Business on February 21, 2024.



Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Vergara, Wright, Foley, Nageswaran, Matsuda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Baldauf, Campbell

ADOPTED: February 21, 2024