

# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE NOVEMBER 12, 2019

## ZAZIE RESTAURANT

*Application No.:* LBR-2019-20-012  
*Business Name:* Zazie Restaurant  
*Business Address:* 941 Cole Street  
*District:* District 5  
*Applicant:* Jennifer Bennett Piallat, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* October 7, 2019  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Catherine Opoix opened Zazie in April 1992, naming the bistro after the Louis Malle film *Zazie dans le Metro*. Specializing in American style brunches and Provençal dinners, Zazie quickly became popular, gaining a reputation as a locals' favorite for brunch and dinner, serving meals seven days a week. Jennifer Bennett Piallat joined Catherine's team as General Manager in April 2000, and then purchased Zazie from Catherine in February 2005. Piallat took over ownership with a unique mindset, determined to make the staff part of the family of Zazie and part of the community of Cole Valley. Within the first year, Zazie established a 401(k) with 4% employer match, which was unheard of in non-union restaurants. Over the next few years, Zazie introduced fully-funded health and dental insurance to all its employees who worked even one day per week. Paid parental/vacation/sick leave were also incorporated into Zazie's business model. The investment in Zazie's employees began to pay off, as people were more committed and stayed longer. Presently, over half of Zazie's employees have worked at the restaurant for a decade or more, and the 37 employees have amassed almost two million dollars in retirement funds.

Once consistency with the staff was achieved, Zazie worked towards becoming the neighborhood's most reliable, dependable restaurant. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner every day except Christmas, Zazie quickly became a staple in the Cole Valley scene. Zazie is not yet 30 years old, but is eligible for listing on the Legacy Business Registry. The business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement. Zazie's rent doubled on their last lease renewal in 2012, and it goes up 3-6% every year. Their lease is up for renewal again in 2022.

The business is located on the west side of Cole Street between Carl Street and Parnassus Avenue in the Cole Valley neighborhood.

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





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No, the applicant has not operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years.

941 Cole Street from 1992 to Present (27 years)

PER CRITERION 1: Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?

Yes, Zazie Restaurant has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of the Cole Valley neighborhood and, if not included on the Registry, would face a significant risk of displacement.

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

Yes, Zazie Restaurant has contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley 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 the American and French cuisine.
The property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status codes of "A" (Historic Resource Present) because of its location within an eligible historic district.
The property is mentioned in the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement for its association with Rikki Streicher, one of SF's most influential businesswomen.
Zazie has over 4,300 reviews on Yelp, with a four star rating. In 2010, Zazie was featured on "Check, Please Bay Area" and received three thumbs up, a rare case for restaurants reviewed on the KQED show.





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

Yes, Zazie Restaurant is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

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

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Interior brick wall original to the pre-1906 schoolhouse that stood on the site.
- 1940s skylights.
- Mural.
- Garden patio.
- American and French cuisine.

### **CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS**

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

- Restaurant.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Zazie Restaurant currently located at 941 Cole 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 NOVEMBER 12, 2019

ZAZIE RESTAURANT

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

*Application No.:* LBR-2019-20-012  
*Business Name:* Zazie Restaurant  
*Business Address:* 941 Cole Street  
*District:* District 5  
*Applicant:* Jennifer Bennett Piallat, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* October 7, 2019  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

## ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR ZAZIE RESTAURANT, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 941 COLE STREET.

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

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

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

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

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

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on November 12, 2019, 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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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 Zazie Restaurant in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Zazie Restaurant:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Interior brick wall original to the pre-1906 schoolhouse that stood on the site.
1940s skylights.
Mural.
Garden patio.
American and French cuisine.

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

- Restaurant.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on November 12, 2019.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

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

- Ayes -
Nays -
Abstained -
Absent -





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OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

**Legacy  
Business  
Registry**

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2019-20-012  
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*Nomination Date:* October 7, 2019  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown

**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

941 Cole Street from 1992 to Present (27 years)

**PER CRITERION 1:** Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?  
\_\_\_\_\_  Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**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:** Zazie has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement. Zazie’s rent doubled on their last lease renewal in 2012, and it goes up 3-6% every year. Their lease is up for renewal again in 2022. If their rent doubled again, they would be pushed out of business. Zazie’s inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry would solidify its standing in Cole Valley and protect its position as a dedicated San Francisco employer moving forward during these uncertain times.

**DELIVERY DATE TO HPC:** October 9, 2019

Richard Kurylo  
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisor  
District 5



City and County of San Francisco

## Vallie Brown

October 7, 2019

San Francisco Office of Small Business  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
City Hall Room 140

Dear Colleagues,

I am proud to nominate *Zazie*, one of my favorite restaurants in the Cole Valley neighborhood for the Legacy Business Registry Program. After over 25 years of serving the neighborhood, it is time that *Zazie*, and its current owner Jennifer Bennett Pierrat be recognized for the significant contributions she and her team have made to strengthening the fabric of Cole Valley. *Zazie's* innovative contributions have helped move the needle on the benefits and protections enjoyed by San Francisco's restaurant workers and have provided a framework for other restaurants to become more sustainable for both owners and workers.

Since 1992, *Zazie* has been a leading example of how restaurants in San Francisco can contribute to both our city's identity and to the livelihood of our neighborhoods. At the leadership of Jennifer Bennett Pierrat, *Zazie* employees enjoy highly competitive benefits (*including* a 401(k) plan, fully funded health and dental insurance, and paid leave) and a wage that is free from the uncertainty and sexism of the traditional tip model. These benefits ensure that *Zazie* employees are well taken care of and paid a living wage — two goals that are central to San Francisco's mission of protecting workers. The majority of *Zazie's* staff have been employed in the restaurant for over a decade, making them a vital part of the Cole Valley Community. *Zazie* is one of Cole Valley's most visited restaurants because of its delicious food *and* it is one of the best places to work for all the above reasons.

*Zazie's* commitment to serving its patrons, employees, and the District 5 Community for over 25 years should be commended. It is for these reasons that I am proud to nominate *Zazie* to the Legacy Business Registry. If you have questions related to this nomination, I can be reached by phone at: (415) 554-7630 or by email at: [brownstaff@sfgov.org](mailto:brownstaff@sfgov.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vallie Brown".

Supervisor Vallie Brown

District 5  
City and County of San Francisco

# 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>		
Zazie Restaurant		
<b>BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)</b>		
Jennifer Bennett Piallat		
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:</b>		<b>TELEPHONE:</b>
941 Cole Street San Francisco, CA 94117		((415) 564-5332
		<b>EMAIL:</b>
		[REDACTED]
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<b>FACEBOOK PAGE:</b>	<b>YELP PAGE</b>
www.ZazieSF.com	@zaziesf	Zazie

<b>APPLICANT'S NAME</b>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
<b>APPLICANT'S TITLE</b>	
<b>APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:</b>	<b>TELEPHONE:</b>
	( )
	<b>EMAIL:</b>

<b>SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:</b>	<b>SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):</b>
0382487	8737927

<b>OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff</b>	
<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
941 Cole Street	94117	04/01/1992
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes		

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

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

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

Jennifer Bennett Piallat 10/08/2019

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:



## **ZAZIE RESTAURANT**

### **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.**

After closing her original restaurant, Eglantine, at 941 Cole Street on a quiet residential street in Cole Valley, Catherine Opoix opened Zazie in April 1992. Catherine named the bistro after the Louis Malle film *Zazie dans le Metro*. Specializing in American style brunches and Provençal dinners, Zazie quickly became popular, gaining a reputation as a locals' favorite for brunch and dinner, serving meals seven days a week. The beautiful building has a pre-1906 brick wall and soaring 20-foot ceilings with original skylights, as well as a garden patio out back.

Jennifer Bennett Piallat joined Catherine's team as General Manager in April 2000, and then purchased Zazie from Catherine in February 2005. Since her first job in her stepmother's restaurant in Nashville in 1989, Jennifer has worked every position in the restaurant industry from dishwasher to pastry chef, learning in that time the value of treating employees with the respect and appreciation that is too often lacking in the industry. When she became the owner of Zazie, the restaurant was a thriving brunch business supporting a weak dinner business, with all of the problems that San Francisco restaurants often encounter – staffing was difficult, consistency was irregular and business was fickle.

Jennifer took over ownership with a unique mindset, determined to make the staff part of the family of Zazie and part of the community of Cole Valley. Within the first year, Zazie established a 401(k) with 4% employer match, which was unheard of in non-union restaurants. Over the next few years, Zazie introduced fully-funded health and dental insurance to all its employees who worked even one day per week. Paid parental/vacation/sick leave were also incorporated into Zazie's business model. The investment in Zazie's employees began to pay off, as people were more committed and stayed longer. Presently, over half of Zazie's employees have worked at the restaurant for a decade or more, and the 37 employees have amassed almost two million dollars in retirement funds.

Once consistency with the staff was achieved, Zazie worked towards becoming the neighborhood's most reliable, dependable restaurant. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner every day except Christmas, Zazie quickly became a staple in the Cole Valley scene. With the growth of the Internet, tourists and visitors also found the little restaurant in the little neighborhood.

Today, Zazie serves approximately 160,000 people a year in a dining room that seats 70 with a tiny kitchen that is only 13' x 6' (smaller than most walk in closets).

Zazie is not yet 30 years old, but is eligible for listing on the Legacy Business Registry. The business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement. Zazie's rent doubled on their last lease renewal in 2012, and it goes up 3-6% every year. Their lease is up for renewal again in 2022. If their rent doubled again, they would be pushed out of business. Zazie's inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry would solidify its standing in Cole Valley and protect its position as a dedicated San Francisco employer moving forward during these uncertain times.

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

Zazie Restaurant has not ceased operations since it opened in April 1992.

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

The business is technically not a family-owned business, defined here as any business in which two or more family members are involved and the majority of ownership or control lies within a family. The restaurant is solely owned by Jennifer Bennett Piallat.

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

The ownership history of Zazie Restaurant is as follows:

1992 to 2005:           Catherine Opoix  
2005 to Present:       Jennifer Bennett Piallat

**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 of the existence of the business since 1992 is provided 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 building at 941 Cole Street is classified by the Planning Department as Category A, Historic Resource Present, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The building is located in the Eligible Cole Valley Historic District and is potentially historic due to its association with Rikki Streicher, one of San Francisco's most

influential businesswomen. The space was the location of Maud's, a lesbian bar from 1966 to 1989. Rikki Streicher was a San Francisco lesbian and gay rights activist who would later go on to open another women's bar, Amelia's, and become a co-founder of the Gay Games. The bar was originally called "The Study," and later "Maud's Study." As women were not allowed to be employed as bartenders in California until 1971, Streicher hired male bartenders and tended bar herself. Streicher stated about the creation of Maud's, "I've always felt that bars were the most honest, open, free place that women could go," and that she founded Maud's with a "no labels" policy, welcoming women who did not fit the butch/fem dress and manners code preferred by some other lesbian bars. At the time of the bar's closing in 1989, which was captured in the film *Last Call at Maud's*, it was claimed to be the oldest lesbian bar in the United States. Its history, documented in the film and other media, spanned almost a quarter century of LGBT events.<sup>1</sup>

## **CRITERION 2**

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

Zazie is one of Cole Valley's most reliable, dependable restaurants. Zazie serves breakfast, lunch and dinner every day except Christmas and is a staple in the Cole Valley scene.

Cole Valley has always been a Francophile neighborhood, with the Lycée Français just around the corner. Zazie offers a French Speaking Night the first Sunday of every month, which is a great opportunity for French neighbors and locals who want to practice their language skills to meet and exchange ideas. On Monday nights, dog owners of Cole Valley gather on the heated patio. Grattan Elementary School families are among the strongest regulars. There are at least three children named Zazie whom the restaurant staff have watched grow up over the years.

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

Zazie spearheaded the Tip Free movement, taking tips (and their related sexual harassment and racism concerns) out of the equation in favor of living wages and revenue shares for everyone. Twenty-five percent of every menu item at Zazie is paid out directly to the staff as revenue share.

In 2010, Zazie Restaurant filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court supporting "Healthy San Francisco" against a suit filed by the Golden Gate Restaurant Association. San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera credited the amicus brief as instrumental in the Court's refusal to hear the GGRA's petition.

In 2014, Jennifer Bennett Piallat was invited to be a speaker at the White House Summit on Working Families, hosted by President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama. After the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maud%27s\\_\(bar\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maud%27s_(bar))

Summit, Valerie Jarrett (Senior Advisor to the President) and Tina Tchen (Chief of Staff to the First Lady) invited Jennifer to the West Wing to discuss her “best practices” workplace model.

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

Zazie has over 4,300 reviews on Yelp, with a four star rating. In 2010, Zazie was featured on “Check, Please Bay Area” and received three thumbs up, a rare case for restaurants reviewed on the KQED show.

Over the years, Jennifer Bennett Piallat set an example for San Francisco’s (and the country’s) small business owners, showing them how lucrative and effective “high road/golden rule” ownership can be. Jennifer was recognized with the “Woman Entrepreneur of the Year – San Francisco” award in 2010 by the Women’s Initiative and received letters of commendation from then-California Majority Whip and now California State Treasurer Fiona Ma.

Articles About Tip Free Businesses

The SF Chronicle

“It’s time for tips to go” by Michael Bauer

February 17, 2015

<https://www.sfgate.com/restaurants/diningout/article/Michael-Bauer-It-s-time-for-tips-to-go-6086267.php>

Eater San Francisco:

“How San Francisco Is Pioneering the Tip-Free Model” by Daisy Barringer

October 16, 2015

<https://sf.eater.com/2015/10/16/9557877/tipping-restaurants-san-francisco>)

The National Culinary Review

“take the no-tipping plunge” by Jody Shee

May 2016

[https://www.zaziesf.com/uploads/7/9/8/6/79862748/may16\\_ncr\\_no\\_tipping\\_final.pdf](https://www.zaziesf.com/uploads/7/9/8/6/79862748/may16_ncr_no_tipping_final.pdf)

Articles About Zazie's Employee Benefits Program

San Francisco Chronicle

“Not all restaurants back suit over Healthy S.F.” by Heather Knight

March 22, 2009

<https://www.sfgate.com/restaurants/article/Not-all-restaurants-back-suit-over-Healthy-S-F-3247441.php>

KALW Public Radio

“A restaurant owner who thinks differently” by Ben Trefny & Todd Whitney

March 10, 2015

<https://www.kalw.org/post/restaurant-owner-who-thinks-differently#stream/0>

Hoodline

“10 Years In, Zazie Owner Jennifer Piallat Still Puts Employees First” by Fernando Pujals  
May 29, 2015

<https://hoodline.com/2015/05/10-years-in-zazie-owner-jennifer-piallat-still-puts-employees-first>

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

Zazie is happy to include among their patrons Jony Ive (former chief design officer of Apple); the musicians Adele, Tracy Chapman and Tom Waits; the actors Benjamin Bratt, Danny Glover, Sharon Stone and Robyn Williams; the sports players Olympian ice skater Brian Boitano and Giants pitcher Barry Zito; and the politicians Mayor London Breed and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi.

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

Zazie is part of the Tip Free movement, taking tips out of the equation in favor of living wages and revenue shares for all employees. Twenty-five percent of every menu item at Zazie paid directly to the staff as revenue share. In 2018, the staff averaged \$43 per hour plus fully-funded health and dental insurance and a 401(k) with 4 percent employer match, two weeks paid leave and six weeks parental leave. Zazie also funded interest free loans for car purchases, rental deposits, rehabilitation treatment, medical bills and other personal needs for its staff. The restaurant pays all of the employees' insurance copayments for doctor visits and hospital stays as well, so their health care is truly cost-free to them.

Zazie is also proud to feature set schedules, which allow the staff to plan for their lives, including college classes, child care, doctors appointments, vacations and other jobs. Employees have full control over their schedule and can pick up and give away shifts at will. Knowing when they will work every week not only gives staff the ability to plan their lives, it also gives them the security of knowing how much their income will be in advance.

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

Zazie's guests are mostly locals of Cole Valley, with many guests patronizing the restaurant for 20+ years. The local French American school students, parents and teachers come to Zazie often.

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

The interior brick wall is original to the pre-1906 schoolhouse that used to be in the building. Skylights are original to the 1940s. The 15' x 7' mural depicting a fictional French countryside bistro named “Bistro Piallat” on the dining room wall was painted by local artist Leif Wold in 2004. The garden patio in back is a favorite outdoor dining spot for San Franciscans as well.

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

If Zazie closed down, 38 employees would lose their income along with fully funded benefits and retirement plans. Hundreds of thousands of guests, both locals and tourists, would be without their favorite benedicts. When Zazie closed for repairs for six weeks in 2008, neighbors left hundreds of Post-It notes crying out at their low hollandaise blood levels and lost hopes of birthday/celebratory brunches and dinners at the restaurant. Cole Valley has many restaurants, but Zazie is the linchpin of the culinary scene in the neighborhood.

**CRITERION 3**

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

Zazie gets more French as the day goes on. Breakfast is a traditional, hearty American breakfast. Lunch is Nicoise salads and roasted trout. Dinner is full-on Provencal cuisine with lots of slowly braised dishes and comfort food.

**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)**

The business is committed to maintaining its historical tradition as a small, local restaurant with exceptional employee benefits.

**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.).**

Zazie is committed to maintaining the historic brick wall, skylights, garden patio, and murals.

**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.**

Documentation that demonstrates the business has been a restaurant since 1992 is included in this Legacy Business Registry application.







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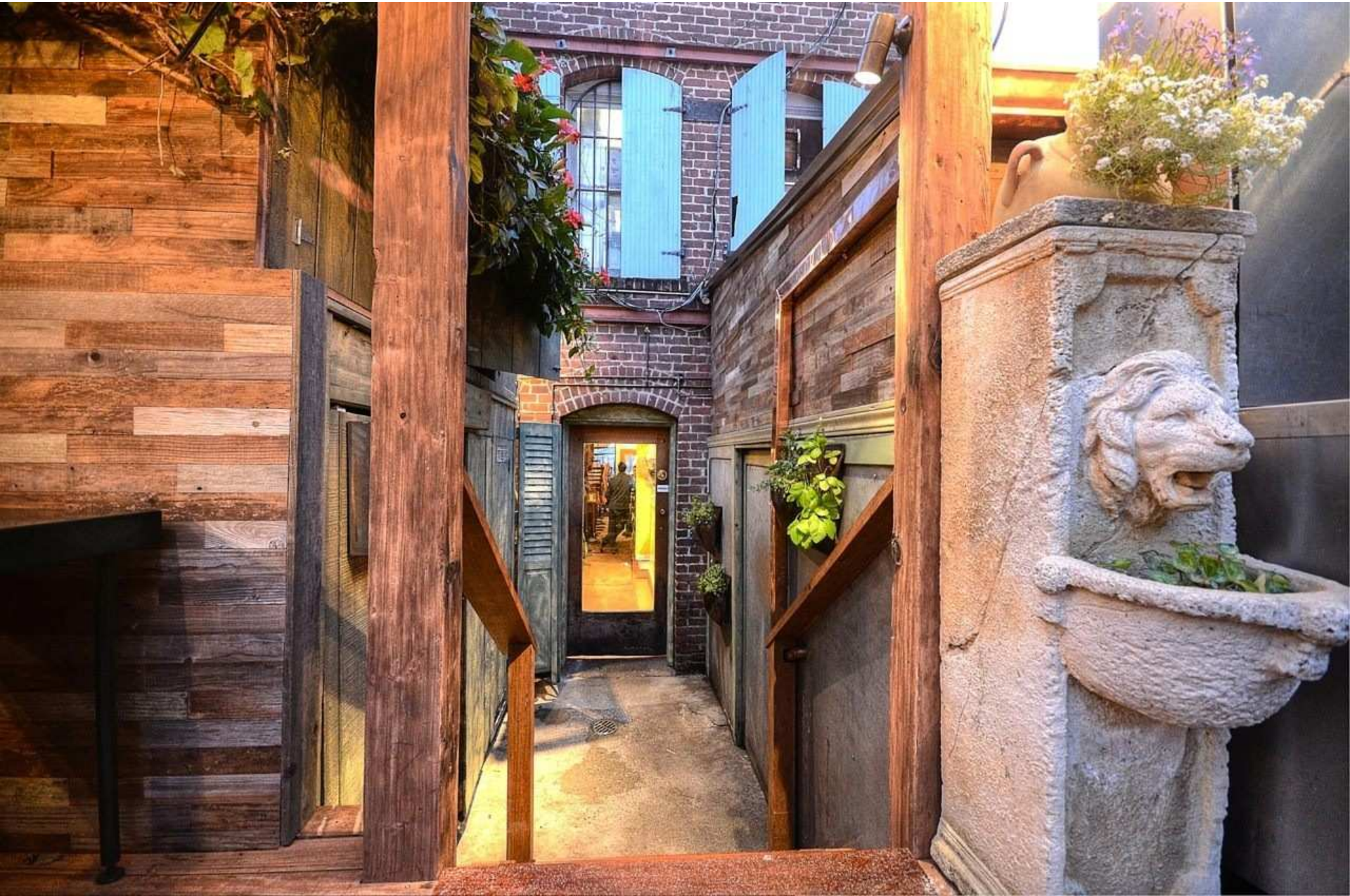














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# Eliminating tips brings unintended consequences in Bay Area

Jonathan Kauffman | Jan. 4, 2016 | Updated: Jan. 4, 2016 12:22 p.m.



Justin Lovell waits on guests at Sous Beurre Kitchen, which opened in February under a tipless model but abandoned it in October when it proved too costly.

Photo: Jason Henry, Special To The Chronicle

Michael Mauschbaugh, chef-owner of Sous Beurre Kitchen, has long despised tipping. The standard service model, he said, creates huge discrepancies between the wages that servers and cooks make, for one. “Customers feel like they have a right to reward or discipline my employee,” he added. “That should be my job.”

So when Sous Beurre Kitchen opened in the Mission in February, Mauschbaugh followed the example of five Bay Area restaurants that abandoned tipping in late 2014. He printed all-inclusive prices on his menu, which allowed him to pay his kitchen staff well above minimum wage and offer health insurance.

## More Food & Home



MICHAEL BAUER

**More Bay Area restaurants go**



BY JONATHAN KAUFFMAN

**Bay Area's food-delivery**

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This October, though, Mauschbaugh abandoned the tipless model and issued pay cuts. “We got overrun with taxes, and it became unsustainable,” he said.

Whether or not to accept tips has become a discussion point for restaurateurs all over the Bay Area and, increasingly, the country. Spurred by voter-driven minimum wage increases and the difficulty of finding qualified staff, growing numbers of local restaurants are opting for all-inclusive prices or fixed service charges. In the process, these early adopters have encountered a host of unintended consequences. Some restaurants have adjusted with small tweaks. Others — including two of the original five — have given up the tipless experiment.

### **Other cities try policy**

The conversation has taken on national dimensions. Major New York restaurateurs such as Danny Meyer and Andrew Talow have announced that their restaurants will go tipless by the end of 2016. High-profile chef Andy Ricker introduced, and just dropped, a fixed-service charge at his Pok Pok Los Angeles. Joe’s Crab Shack, which has 130 locations, is testing tipless policies in 18 of its restaurants.

The move toward tipless dining is sparked by rising labor costs, which have restaurant owners scrambling to figure out how much they can absorb and how much diners will cover. Restaurant insiders readily acknowledge that “front of house” staff (servers, bussers and bartenders) make much more — sometimes three or four times more — than “back of house” staff such as cooks and dishwashers. The new minimum wage laws passed in 2014 did nothing to resolve this discrepancy. Waiters at higher-end restaurants see the same increase in their base wages as, say, dishwashers, but receive \$20 to \$50 or more an hour above that in tips. Labor laws can make it tricky for employers to institute tip pooling, distributing tipped income among the entire staff.

So when Jennifer Piallat, owner of Zazie in Cole Valley, moved to all-inclusive pricing six months ago, she raised everyone’s base wage to \$15 an hour. Above that, she allocates a certain percentage of each shift’s revenue to all staff, making sure waiters receive enough incentive to keep sales high.



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Sous Beurre Kitchen chef-owner Michael Mauschbaugh says he was getting doubly taxed on his payroll when the Mission restaurant used a tipless model.

Photo: Jason Henry, Special To The Chronicle

Piallat was surprised and pleased to see the relationship between managers and waiters change. “They become your employees, not the employees of your customers,” she said. Service has improved. Waiters treat their tables more equally, instead of spending more time with customers whom they assume will tip more. Another surprise: Few diners have complained about the all-inclusive model.

Jon Pira, who has waited tables at Zazie for two years, was so worried about the transition that he took a second job. Last month, confident that his wages weren’t dropping, he gave it up. “One thing I enjoy about (the model) is you know what you’re going to make.” His wages are based on overall sales, not individual customer decisions, and he doesn’t lose money by tipping out his support staff when a diner stiffes him.

#### ‘A better team’

Allison Hopelain, who owns Camino in Oakland with her husband, Russell Moore, was one of the first to switch to all-inclusive pricing. Starting in October 2014, Camino has paid everyone on staff a fixed hourly wage. Diners may raise their eyebrows when they first look over the menu and see a \$14 radish salad or \$37 duck breast. But some tell her that when the check comes they realize it’s comparable to what they spend at similar restaurants. The staff pools any cash tips that diners may leave on the table to throw parties or help a colleague out in an emergency.

The shift has required more communication between managers, staff and diners. But, Hopelain said, “the restaurant feels totally different. It feels like a better team.”





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The restaurant abandoned the tipless model in October after the owner said it proved unsustainable.

Photo: Jason Henry, Special To The Chronicle

But as many other Bay Area restaurants have learned, eliminating tips isn't a matter of raising prices 20 percent or adding a service charge to the check.

Taxes and hidden costs go up — significantly. Restaurants pay sales tax based on gross receipts, and the city and state do not recognize the difference between an 18 percent service charge and an extra dessert. As Mauschbaugh explained, he was getting doubly taxed on his payroll. When he switched to the conventional tipping model, he said his taxes dropped 35 percent.

Piallat agrees that the sales-tax boost has been tricky to absorb. Added to it was a 25 percent spike in her workers' comp insurance, which is pegged to payroll costs. After arguing with her payroll company and changing the language she used to describe Zazie's revenue-sharing plan, she was able to get the amount reduced. None of her peers have had the same luck.

### Keeping good help

Taxes aren't the reason that other restaurants have abandoned tipless models.

Thad Vogler, owner of Bar Agricole and Trou Normand, had joined Camino in switching his restaurants over to all-inclusive prices in October 2014. One year later, both of Vogler's restaurants returned to tipping because they kept shedding front-of-house staff. "We kept taking on younger waiters with less experience, teaching them to serve, and then after a few months they'd move to another house where they'd make more money," he said.

Jason Fox, chef-owner of Oro, had the same experience. Oro opened in downtown San Francisco in September with all-inclusive prices, but gave them up after only two months in business. Fox says he was having a hard time finding qualified servers. "I think they were getting a living wage, but it wasn't enough money for them," he said.

Maya Oldson, a waiter at Trou Normand, stuck around because she believed in the model, but admits that by the time the changeover happened, she was

putting out feelers for new jobs. Not only did the biweekly profit-sharing bonus add up to a maximum of \$200 above her hourly wages, she wasn't guaranteed a 40-hour workweek. Since the transition back to tipping, she makes two to three times more money. "I can save some money and feel a little more secure," she said.

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Given the high cost of living in the Bay Area, no one blames waiters for wanting more money. But some do attribute waiter skittishness to psychology. Servers are used to walking out of the door with cash in hand. Quite a few under-report their tips, too, to avoid paying taxes on all that ready money. (Zazie's Pierrat said that she refused to hear complaints on this topic. "I pay 50 percent taxes on my income," she would tell waiters.)



Jake Bisson serves dinner at Sous Beurre Kitchen.  
Photo: Jason Henry, Special To The Chronicle

Andrew Hoffman, co-owner of Comal and the Advocate, said his Berkeley restaurants ended up needing to raise prices slightly more than expected to cover the additional taxes, pay cooks more and keep front-of-house staff from seeing pay cuts. Both Sous Beurre Kitchen and Bar Agricole admit that they could have kept their all-inclusive prices if they had raised prices even higher, but feared alienating diners.

"It's death to be thought of as an expensive restaurant," agreed Paul Canales of Duende, who was planning on joining the group of five in October 2014 but backed away at the last minute, giving his kitchen staff raises instead.

Fears of price perception led some restaurants, such as Sessions in the Presidio, to opt for a fixed service charge over inclusive prices. Ippuku's Christian Geideman said his restaurant's service charge has probably pushed casual diners away, though they were replaced by ones willing to spend more on dinner.

### **Returning to tipping**

Some of the brand-new restaurants that opened with tipless models have returned to tipping or adjusted their strategy as part of their initial price adjustments as they figure out how to become profitable. After two months in business, Cala adjusted its prices by adding a fixed 20 percent service charge to what had been considered all-inclusive prices before; general manager Emma Rosenbush said the main complaint she receives is from diners who would like to see an additional tip line on the credit-card statement so they can increase the percentage.

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Lord Stanley on Russian Hill retreated altogether. “We didn’t want to come across as an expensive restaurant, but we’re not really able to make (all-inclusive pricing) work without a dramatic increase in prices,” chef-owner Rupert Blease said.

Meanwhile, the rest of the country is watching.

“You’re three years ahead of us,” said Sabato Sagaria, chief restaurant officer at Danny Meyer’s Union Square Hospitality Group, which owns 13 high-profile restaurants in New York.

Sagaria, who discussed tipping with Vogler and Hopelain on a public panel last year, said his group has applied lessons it has learned from the Bay Area as it has considered how to rejigger staffing levels, where to raise prices and how to talk about the change with staff and guests. The Union Square Hospitality Group’s first restaurant made the switch in November, and the group will roll out the policy across the other 12 over the course of the year.

### **Uniting industry**

One of the unexpected benefits that have come from discussing these changes, Sagaria said, is that it is bringing normally competitive industry players together. “We’re talking openly about these challenges,” he said. “It’s not happening in isolation.”

Other restaurateurs take a darker view of all-inclusive prices, particularly when large chains embrace the idea. The Joe’s Crab Shack announcement prompted Jay Porter, formerly the operator of a tipless restaurant and current owner of Salsipuedes in Oakland, to write an essay predicting how big business may use the tipless model in ways that do not benefit employees: “The principal change here is to eliminate all transparency, so that neither the diner nor the server has any insight into how the money is being distributed.”

Vogler and Mauschbaugh would like to find a way to return to all-inclusive pricing — which may happen, they said, only after a critical mass of restaurants like theirs make the switch.

Meanwhile, restaurants like Comal, Camino, Sessions and Zazie are staying the course. “It can be expensive, but the benefits totally outweigh the challenges,”



Hopelain said. “My end goal is to change the industry, not to make the most money that I can.”

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*Jonathan Kauffman is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. E-mail: [jkauffman@sfchronicle.com](mailto:jkauffman@sfchronicle.com) Tipping: @jonkauffman*

### **Tipping policies**

Restaurants with service-inclusive prices

Camino

Homestead

Old Bus Tavern

Manos Nouveau

Petit Crenn

French Laundry

Mr. Tipple’s

Zazie

Restaurants with

a service charge

The Advocate (20%)

Chez Panisse and Chez Panisse Cafe (17%)

Lazy Bear (20%)

Cala (20%)

Coi (20%)

Sessions (20%)

Californios (18%)

Comal (20%)

Toast (Oakland) 17%

Restaurants with

a table charge

Ippuku (\$7 per person)



Formerly tipless

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Aster

Dopo

Oro

Trou Normand

Bar Agricole

Lord Stanley


Sous Beurre Kitchen

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<https://hoodline.com/2017/07/cole-valley-standby-zazie-celebrates-25-years>



San Francisco

## Cole Valley Standby 'Zazie' Celebrates 25 Years



Photos: Walter Thompson/Hoodline

*by Walter Thompson*  
*July 16, 2017*

Locals and tourists alike have been lining up to eat at Cole Valley mainstay [Zazie](#) for a quarter of a century. From 2000 to 2005, Jennifer Bennett Piallat was the bistro's manager, but 12 years ago, she bought the place.

Since then, she's adapted its business model in response to—and in some ways, in spite of—San Francisco's competitive restaurant scene. For years, staff have had access to health insurance and an employer-matched 401k.



Owner Jennifer Bennett Piallat.

In 2015, [she went tip-free](#) and offered her staff expense-free vacations and cruises, policies that may have helped her retain workers longer than many restaurants have been in business.

Thanks in part to its veteran personnel, Zazie produces a consistent dining experience that attracts familiar faces from the neighborhood, a steady stream of visitors directed by guidebooks, and even [celebrities like Adele](#).

In 2015, [Piallat told NBC News](#) that her profits are 4 times higher than other successful San Francisco restaurants.





When she took over, the restaurant had 24 workers; today, Zazie employs 38, including Miguel, a dishwasher who's been there since 1992.

In 2015, "I wanted to do something special for the staff and particularly for people who'd been with me for 10 years," Piallat told Hoodline.

"Every Christmas, we do this big party where I buy all the gifts," like flat screen TVs, iPads and cases of wine. Decade club employees, however, "picked gifts from a different pile."

Those workers were offered expense-free vacations anywhere in the world, Piallat said. "A trip to Paris, a cruise to Alaska, Costa Rica, all these different places. Or they could spin a wheel for the money and get the money instead."



French onion soup.

Piallat spent her teenage years shucking oysters in a family restaurant, and worked as a host and manager after arriving in the Bay Area 20 years ago. Her experience in different positions sharpened her focus regarding taking care of her employees, she said.

In June 2015, Zazie was one of the first restaurants in the city to go tip-free.

“Doing it was a very delicate thing,” she said. “We really had to have an open-door policy and listen to our servers.” But unlike other restaurants that eliminated gratuities, “we didn’t lose a single server by going tip-free,” said Piallat.

She noted that other San Francisco restaurants have experimented with getting rid of tips, “but not in a very effective manner.”



Coquille St. Jacques, Bastille Day 2016.

Restaurateur Thad Vogler’s eateries Trio Normand and Bar Agricole also went tip-free in 2015, raising prices by 20% to shrink the pay gap between servers and kitchen staff, [CNN reported](#). Vogler said he lost 70% of his formerly tipped workers, which led him to revoke the policy.

“A lot of places lost all their good staff,” said Piallat. “I think you really had to be a lot more compassionate and pay more attention than a lot of restaurant owners are willing to do.”

All Zazie workers—kitchen and front of house—can opt into a 401k with employer-matched contributions, as well as an insurance plan that predates [Healthy San Francisco](#), the city’s health access program.

“We’ve always done significantly more than Healthy SF requires, so I don’t even bother looking at it,” she said.

Life at Zazie wasn’t always as savory as its gingerbread pancakes.

“When I first got here, it was a real panic scene,” she recalled. “There were only two waiters on at brunch—one waiter with 12 or 14 tables, no bussers, and it was just constantly trying to put out fires.”



“Now, it’s such a well-run machine that’s steadily busy all the time, so we can really staff it properly,” she said. “We’ve become a much more mature restaurant—more organized, more professional.”



La tarte tatin maison, Bastille Day 2016.

Piallat said she wants to do more special events like dinner parties, wine dinners and movie screenings, but the bistro’s popularity makes that a challenge, since “we’re constantly just keeping up with what we’re doing.”

Today, the restaurant closes from 2–5pm to give staff a chance to recharge and prepare for the dinner rush. Trying to stay open all day was “one of the biggest mistakes I made,” said Piallat. “We need that break mentally, as much as physically.”

On most weekends, evenings and afternoons, a 20- to 30-minute wait for a table is part of the Zazie dining experience. Piallat said the average customer spends about 40 minutes in the restaurant, and that’s reasonable.

“What is happening at brunch on a Sunday that you don’t have 30 minutes to talk to whomever you came to brunch with?” she asked, noting that many regularly spend their wait time sipping bloody Marys and playing table tennis at [next door bar Finnegans Wake](#).

“You’re not just coming here to put food in your face, swallow and be full,” said Piallat. “You’re coming to spend time with people, to get off your phone and off technology, and have some face to face time with people for a few minutes.”

Given the persistent sidewalk crowds, Piallat said she “would love to have a parklet,” but despite five years of effort, it hasn’t come to fruition.



Photo: Calistoga Kitchen/[Yelp](#)

A Cole Valley resident, the restaurateur also has a house in Napa, where she recently purchased a sister restaurant, [Calistoga Kitchen](#), with three other partners.

The official takeover happens on August 1; Piallat said the venture will feature a dish or two that’s familiar to Zazie customers. On September 10, the restaurant will [preview its menu concept at Calistoga Harvest Table](#), a food festival.

“Every place I know that opens a second place, the first one goes downhill,” said Piallat. “I’ve never seen it not be true.”

To buck that trend, she said she’ll continue to work closely with her staff. “When you open two or three other restaurants, you’re turning all of that over to someone else,” she said.



Besides buying part of a Napa restaurant, she said she's also putting the finishing touches on Zazie's first cookbook. Piallat considered publishing it herself, but "I got the sample and it looked so novice and silly that I think I'm going to have to find someone to help me with it," she said.

"I'm shopping it around to actual publishers to turn it into something decent," said Piallat. "Right now, it looks straight out of a church bake sale."

*Zazie (415-564-5332) serves weekday brunch from 8-2 and is open for dinner every night at 5pm. On weekends and holidays, the restaurant is open from 9-3.*

# Assembly

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## ZAZIE

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Assemblywoman

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Presented on February 11, 2010



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August 10, 2011

Jen Piallat  
Zazie  
941 Cole Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117

Dear Ms. Piallat,

Congratulations on being selected by *The San Francisco Bay Guardian* as the Best Brunch in San Francisco for 2011! I commend you for your outstanding work and I am delighted that your excellence has been recognized. I look forward to hearing of your future successes.

If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our San Francisco office at 415-557-1300, our San Rafael office at 415-479-6612, or via our website at [www.sen.ca.gov/leno](http://www.sen.ca.gov/leno).

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Leno".

MARK LENO  
Senator, 3<sup>rd</sup> District

ML:rw

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

June 25, 2014

Jennifer Piallat  
Zazie  
941 Cole Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117

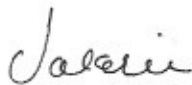
Dear Jennifer,

We are so grateful that you took the time to participate in Monday's White House Summit on Working Families. Your perspective added great texture to our conversation, and the President appreciated you being there.

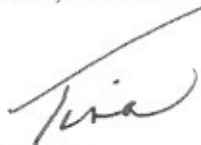
Our hope is to see this summit serve as a catalyzing moment and an important milestone in our ongoing effort to change how this country thinks about women, our workplaces, and our families. And what became even clearer throughout the day is that the changes we need to make as a society will be championed by leaders like you. Watching you and your peers engaging with advocates and emerging leaders at the summit gave us great hope for the future.

Monday would not have been the success it was without your presence and participation. We truly can't thank you enough for coming and sharing your best practices.

Warmest regards,



Valerie B. Jarrett  
Senior Advisor to the President  
Chair, White House Council on Women and Girls



Tina Tchen  
Chief of Staff to the First Lady  
Executive Director, White House Council on Women and Girls

## Letters of Support Zazie Restaurant

**Emma Esrock**  
[REDACTED]

Zazie is the heartbeat of Cole Valley. It has been a destination for city dwellers for decades, and for me for the past 10+ years. I typically don't have the patience to wait in line for breakfast; Zazie is the exception.

Zazie's exceptionalism is due to a few fundamental values: 1) Amazing people - Jen steers with the ship with people like Mario and Adam seamlessly guiding the ship to port. 2) Quality food - there is no better place for breakfast, lunch or dinner. The menus balance the steadfast classics with the rotating seasonal options - all made with love using the finest ingredients. 3) Unparalleled ambiance and service - it's a treat to be there, and you get a feeling everyone else (staff and guests alike) shares that same belief.

I've mourned and celebrated at Zazie. I've shared meals with relatives, friends who should be relatives, colleagues, boyfriends, my friend's hyperactive golden retriever. It is my home away from home - and the perfect encapsulation of our lovely Cole Valley enclave. I can think of no finer institution, or leader, to be considered a legacy, and recognized as THE foundational pillar of our neighborhood.

---

**Carolyn and Damon Krytzer**

[REDACTED] San Francisco, CA 94117

I consider Zazie the heart of Cole Valley. It's our neighborhood restaurant that we share with the rest of the city. We always look forward to coming to Zazie - for the food, the ambience, and the array of phenomenal servers who have also become our friends. We know what's going on in their lives and they know what's going on in our lives - it's our quaint lil' community center and we love it!

My husband and I have lived in Cole Valley for 16 years and we've been enthusiastic fans of Zazie the entire time! Zazie is consistently extraordinary in every way, but especially in how it treats its employees. Many of them have been employees for as long as we've been customers - and that's a long time.

To me, Zazie is a great example of restaurant utopia. Under Jen's leadership, Zazie does what's right - for customers, employees and our neighborhood. Cole Valley wouldn't be the same without Zazie! It's the heart of our neighborhood

---

**Wendy Beck**

[REDACTED] San Francisco, CA 94117

I've been lucky enough to live in the Cole Valley neighborhood for 21 years now, and as long as I've been here, so has Zazie and its wonderful staff. Zazie is not only a neighborhood institution; it is a San Francisco tradition now, as all the lines will attest. People come from all over, ruining my chance be seated immediately, even with my hood credentials. It's OK. It's worth it.

I know how hard it is to run a small business in San Francisco. I know because I see the empty storefronts grow more legion by the day. What with minimum wage and other laws to comply with and ravenous

landlords who often don't understand that we're in new territory now with delivery services for everything, including lunch and dinner.

Jennifer Bennett and her team have kept Zazie priced so that I can afford to treat myself to one of their amazing brunch dishes now and then, and pop in for dinner with a neighborhood friend. Zazie is one of the first restaurants to introduce a no-tipping (or, tip included) policy and one of the few to have been successful with it. It's known nation-wide now for its policy and for being a place employees are fairly treated. I know I'm proud to have such a place in the neighborhood.

That is why I'm asking you to award Zazie legacy status in San Francisco. If anyplace deserves it, Zazie does. It represents San Francisco values at its best. And I'd say that even if they hadn't named a pasta dish after me on last year's menu! But they did!

---

**William Simpson, Cole Valley Resident since 2000**

**San Francisco, Ca 94117**

It is often said Zazie is a "destination point" in San Francisco and it is but it is so much more.

I have lived in Cole Valley for almost twenty years and Zazie and their staff have played a very important role not only for their wonderful meals and ambience but for its healing. There is minimal turnover and thus Zazie is part of our community. I have frequented Zazie all of these years but especially when I was diagnosed with kidney disease and the aftermath of my transplant. I needed to move into a different neighborhood for almost a year and after my transplant I had to come to UCSF on Parnassus for labs every day for a number of weeks. Every morning after my labs I would go to Zazie because it offered a deep sense of community and familiarity. It was here that I ordered the Un, Deux, Trois and did not need to be asked because the staff knew what I was having before I even asked. They also cared. It was here that I saw the familiar faces that I had known and it is here that I know each server by name, including the chefs and dishwashers...community. Food and atmosphere that heals. Zazie is a neighborhood and city landmark.

In 2013 I had a hiking accident and lost my right leg and was in a wheelchair for 1 1/2 years. Where did I go four of seven evenings a week for dinner? Zazie. It was here that I would be brought to my table, served with compassion because everyone knew my name and my story. Not only did they serve me my meals but made sure I got home safely, even having a server now and then accompanying me to be sure I was safe or because they saw how tired I was from wheeling myself in my wheelchair and insisted in helping. Where else do you get this? Zazie is a community and city landmark.

I have also had celebrations at Zazie, my 50th birthday, 60th birthday 65th birthday, quaint New Year's Eve dinners and toasts, toasts to friends to celebrate their accomplishments, marriages anniversaries, births of their children. , a promotion, a brave change in career. All of us celebrating together within our Cole Valley neighborhood and community with the staff right along side of us. A place of bonding, of love of support...That is Zazie! A neighborhood and city landmark.

I watched Jennifer Bennett the present proprietor rise in the ranks of Zazie, knowing every job, interacting with all who come in the door from whatever position she held with grace and warmth. She is a national example of fair wages, healthcare and a pioneer in the food industry with all of these things. In fact Congress interviewed her to speak to her regarding this because of her example. Zazie is a city and national landmark.



I ask that you make Zazie a City of San Francisco Landmark to exemplify what this city stands for; pioneers, equality, justice and a living wage.

---

**Richard Ciccarone**

[REDACTED]  
**San Francisco, CA 94117**  
[REDACTED]

I have been a resident of San Francisco since 1991 and of Cole Valley since 2007. I will spare you the tales of the vanishing San Francisco and all the changes I've seen throughout the years, most of which have been heartbreaking to witness and a result of poor protections for residents and small businesses alike.

It is for the latter that I am writing today. I have been a patron of Zazie (located at 941 Cole Street) for years, as have thousands of others as witnessed by their tremendous success and long lines every day. But it is more than a successful restaurant. It is a place where people in our neighborhood come to talk and share experiences. It does not merely serve food, it serves a purpose. It is not simply a place to eat, it is a hub of our community.

The owner, Jennifer Bennett, has created a welcoming institution that should not only be protected, but serve as a proud beacon of why neighborhoods are the lifeblood of our city. For isn't it the work of the City to protect what makes it unique? Shouldn't we promote the diversity of experiences and history that give us all pride to call ourselves San Franciscans? I ask that you please give Zazie landmark status to help save this small part of what it is that makes our neighborhood, and our City, the envy of so many around the world.

---

**Christine and Mark Fisher**

[REDACTED]  
**San Francisco, CA 94117**  
[REDACTED]

We moved to San Francisco from New York in 2005, and Zazie is one of the main reasons we bought a house in Cole Valley and have stayed here ever since! Of course the food is amazing, and the atmosphere makes you feel like you have been transported to a quaint café in Paris. But most of all, we love that the staff always make us feel at home.

Zazie is our go-to place for all important events in our lives... birthdays, holidays, book club meetings, and visits from out of town friends and family. Our kids have grown up in your dining room, and they love to practice their French with your staff (they are students at the French American school and International High School). We even had our 25th wedding anniversary here, which was an evening we will always remember.

Zazie is a place that is so unique and special, it is impossible to replace. It is what makes Cole Valley the place we love to call home. Please share this with the city, and I hope you are successful in your Legacy status application.

---

**Jennifer Gilroy**

[REDACTED]  
I am sending this email all the way from Colorado to let you know how the heart of Zazie has touched my life. I first learned about Zazie on NBC Nightly News years ago when they ran a story featuring your

small bistro and your unique way of respecting and treating your employees like the valued assets and family members that they are by providing full benefits to all of your employees with a small surcharge on each meal served. It was a heartwarming story and I vowed at that time were I ever to be in San Francisco, I would eat at Zazie!

A few years later, my boyfriend and I traveled from Denver to Sacramento to attend a friend's wedding. When I calculated that San Francisco wasn't that far away, I decided we should drive into the city for the day and eat at Zazie. We did just that and had the meal of our lives. The restaurant was every bit as warm, inviting, and comforting as it appeared in the news story. And the food was amazing! (Yes, I had that delicious pork chop featured on the NBC news story!) Our server was delightful (and explained the source of the bistro's name--we later purchased the video Zazie). The evening turned memorably romantic when my boyfriend asked if I wanted to spend the rest of my life with him.

It was such a wonderful experience and we will return to Zazie's whenever our life path takes us to San Francisco. I hope it will always be there to return to.

---

**Jean Sumner**  
**Cole Valley, San Francisco**

I feel myself stymied on what to write. Do I write about how my sister and I have pictures of us through the years dining at Zazie every time she visits? Do I write about Sunday brunch on the patio and that first bite of a miracle pancake? Do I write about loving Monday nights because of all the adorable dogs? When I walk through the door of Zazie I feel a profound sense of neighborhood and belonging. Zazie treats employees very well, serves delicious food, and does so much to make Cole Valley a neighborhood in the true sense. It's the center of our neighborhood. The glue that holds us together. I go out to dinner because I can walk to Zazie. I wouldn't go to another restaurant if Zazie weren't there. I just wouldn't go out as much. I cannot fathom our neighborhood without Zazie. I hope this letter helps. Happy to speak to anyone in person (hopefully I can find more words).

---

**Allison Wachtel & Byron Smiley**

**San Francisco, CA 94117**

We have lived in the Haight area for over a decade. In that time we have visited Zazie too many times to count.

We bring everyone here because it's such a PERFECT representation of a small, family owned, extraordinary prepared food that also brings the neighborhood together as well.

I have my favorite servers over the years and request them, and see regulars all the time.

Friends, family and business associates are always impressed and want to return on their next trip to San Francisco.

Zazie's is part of San Francisco, more importantly it's an integral part of the Haight / Cole area.

Stars like Adele come regularly when in town.

They are also most deserving because of the benefits they have for their employees.

No tips, it's included and the staff is treated really well. They stay for years.

Make Zazie's a Legacy Business please!

---

**Amy Poli**

**Born and Raised San Franciscan, Lifetime Cole Valley Resident**

**[REDACTED] SF CA 94117**

I am a native of San Francisco and a Native of Cole Valley (I grew up at Stanyan and 17th). I have been going to Zazie as long as I can remember as the restaurant came in to the neighborhood when I was 5 years old. I have so many beautiful memories of Zazie. Eating dinner there with my Great Uncle, an SF state graduate and Marine corp vet, where he told me and my brother about his fighting in Korea. Celebrating my best friends Bridal Shower at Brunch, full of smiles and good laughs. Having dinner with my great aunt and grandmother the last time they ever visited San Francisco. Every great friend I have, I take there for a wonderful meal and feeling like I am home. I have celebrated several anniversaries and Bastille days there with my husband, who is French and loves going for a small taste of home. I most recently went there to celebrate after passing my French Language exam.

Zazie's is an anchor in Cole Valley, it is a true piece of my childhood, adolescence and adulthood. I have magnets on my fridge from a valentines day give away they did. I love that they are trying to make our wonderful neighborhood and city better with excellent food, good times, and pushing to be more modern with no tipping and paying their serves a good wage. It is more than just a great place to eat. It is as much a part of the city as the Golden Gate Bridge in my opinion.

---

**Mae Umbriac**

**[REDACTED] 94114**

Just wanted to send along my family's support for Zazie getting Legacy Status. I can't imagine a more worthy place being qualified for this honor.

I moved to the outskirts of Cole Valley in 2004. Since then I've been coming to Zazie for its consistently delicious food, cozy and comfortable atmosphere and amazing and friendly staff. We are always so taken care of...by Mario, Megan, Suhail, Aidan, and others - it feels like coming to see family.

We entertain at Zazie with local friends and those visiting from afar. I've been to Zazie on dates with my then-boyfriend, now-husband, and we have graduated to come as a foursome with our kids.

I've celebrated so many wonderful times at Zazie - from Kate's 30th birthday buy-out in 2005 to my repeated 29th birthday just last week. Zazie is an integral part of my family's San Francisco experience.

Zazie is a top notch staple in our little neighborhood, it is one of the pieces that makes my home my home.

I hope that you and Zazie are around for my kids 29th birthdays too!

---

**Steve Heilig**

[REDACTED]  
**San Francisco, CA 94117**  
[REDACTED]

I write to briefly state my support for Zazie restaurant's bid for San Francisco.

I have been a customer of Zazie since it opened. It is an institution in Cole Valley, really the most renowned and respected eating establishment in the neighborhood - as evidenced by the long waits for tables at many times. Visitors from out of town ask to return there each time they revisit our city. The staff and menu evolve slowly and are an integral part of the eatery's appeal, image, and endurance. In short, in these regards it is like a relative handful of veteran San Francisco restaurants, widely known with a large and loyal clientele who return regularly.

I will only add that the proprietor was extremely helpful in supporting those of us who designed and advocated for Healthy San Francisco, a much-needed healthcare coverage program which is itself now part of our city's legacy. She thus earned my lasting loyalty - I'd eat there even if the food were not so good. But fortunately it is always superb!

---

**Ryan Wiederkehr**

[REDACTED]  
**SF, CA 94117**  
[REDACTED]

I'm happy to be able to write this letter!

I've been coming to Zazie for over twenty years, as long as I've lived in San Francisco! It's a great neighborhood anchor, and potentially the best-known Cole Valley institution for people who don't live in Cole Valley or know it very well. Often times people who don't know where Cole Valley is will say "Ohhhhhhhh" when I tell them it's the neighborhood where Zazie is located.

I fully support the legacy status for Zazie. I'm sure I'm not alone here!

Good luck and thanks for everything over the past twenty two years.

---

**Ilana Minkoff**

[REDACTED] San Francisco, CA 94117

To whom it may concern, I'm writing to you today to explain the significance of Zazie Restaurant to me and it's importance to Cole Valley. Personally, I've lived in Cole Valley for nearly 20 years and had visited the neighborhood for far longer than that before deciding to move here. Zazie has always been a regular part of my existence and I cannot imagine this neighborhood without it. I've had birthday parties, celebrated many Mother's days and Father's days there, I've had gatherings of friends, meetings for work and for nonprofits I've worked with, I've met friends for brunch and gone on dates there. I've met neighbors as a result of Zazie's various theme nights and made great friends that started as neighbors and over many years and glasses of wine have become the best of friends as we all spent time together on the patio out back and on the streetside tables.

It truly is an anchor for our community, but it's also more than that, it is really a community-gathering place. When I sit outside in front for dinner, there has never once been an evening that I haven't known at least a handful of passers by, many of whom will sit down and join for an impromptu glass of wine under the heat lamps.

As a REALTOR in the neighborhood, I always point out how special that little restaurant is to our neighborhood and frequently pop in with clients to take a break from touring property. That alone makes them decide the Cole Valley way of life is what they want. I even



had my client appreciation party there this year with 25 of my clients, and many moved to Cole Valley and have now raised their kids and had family events there, as well.

I would highly recommend Zazie to get legacy status. If neighborhood restaurants that are an essential part of our communities get priced out and go away, then the neighborhood will lose it's special feel and that would be tragic.

*Filing Date:* October 9, 2019  
*Case No.:* 2019-020098LBR  
*Business Name:* Zazie Restaurant  
*Business Address:* 941 Cole Street  
*Zoning:* NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial Cluster) Zoning District  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 1272/003  
*Applicant:* Jennifer Bennett Piallat, Owner  
941 Cole Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Located In:* District 5  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
[shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org](mailto:shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org)

## **BUSINESS DESCRIPTION**

Catherine Opoix opened Zazie in April 1992, naming the bistro after the Louis Malle film *Zazie dans le Metro*. Specializing in American style brunches and Provençal dinners, Zazie quickly became popular, gaining a reputation as a locals' favorite for brunch and dinner, serving meals seven days a week. Jennifer Bennett Piallat joined Catherine's team as General Manager in April 2000, and then purchased Zazie from Catherine in February 2005. Piallat took over ownership with a unique mindset, determined to make the staff part of the family of Zazie and part of the community of Cole Valley. Within the first year, Zazie established a 401(k) with 4% employer match, which was unheard of in non-union restaurants. Over the next few years, Zazie introduced fully-funded health and dental insurance to all its employees who worked even one day per week. Paid parental/vacation/sick leave were also incorporated into Zazie's business model. The investment in Zazie's employees began to pay off, as people were more committed and stayed longer. Presently, over half of Zazie's employees have worked at the restaurant for a decade or more, and the 37 employees have amassed almost two million dollars in retirement funds.

Once consistency with the staff was achieved, Zazie worked towards becoming the neighborhood's most reliable, dependable restaurant. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner every day except Christmas, Zazie quickly became a staple in the Cole Valley scene. Zazie is not yet 30 years old, but is eligible for listing on the Legacy Business Registry. The business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement. Zazie's rent doubled on their last lease renewal in 2012, and it goes up 3-6% every year. Their lease is up for renewal again in 2022.

The business is located on the west side of Cole Street between Carl Street and Parnassus Avenue in the Cole Valley neighborhood. It is within a NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial, Cluster) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

### *Review Criteria*

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1992.

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

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

- i. Zazie Restaurant has operated continuously in San Francisco for 27 years. has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement.
- ii. Zazie Restaurant has contributed to the history and identity of San Francisco.
- iii. Zazie Restaurant 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 the American and French cuisine.

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

Yes. The property is located within the California Register-eligible Cole Valley Historic District. The district is composed predominantly of residential buildings constructed between 1900- 1915 in the Queen Anne, Arts & Crafts, Tudor Revival, and Colonial Revival, and Classical Revival styles. The period of significance identified for the surrounding eligible historic district is around 1900-1915.

5. *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 codes of "A" (Historic Resource Present) because of its location within an eligible historic district.

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

Yes. The property is mentioned in the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement for its association with Rikki Streicher, one of SF's most influential businesswomen. Maud's was the longest running lesbian bar in SF, in business from the 1960s to 1989.

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

Yes. Zazie has over 4,300 reviews on Yelp, with a four star rating. In 2010, Zazie was featured on "Check, Please Bay Area" and received three thumbs up, a rare case for restaurants reviewed on the KQED show. Jennifer was recognized with the "Woman Entrepreneur of the Year – San Francisco" award in 2010 by the Women's Initiative and received letters of commendation from then-California Majority Whip and now California State Treasurer Fiona Ma.

Articles:

- The SF Chronicle, "It's time for tips to go" by Michael Bauer, February 17, 2015
- Eater San Francisco, "How San Francisco Is Pioneering the Tip-Free Model" by Daisy Barringer, October 16, 2015
- The National Culinary Review, "take the no-tipping plunge" by Jody Shee, May 2016
- San Francisco Chronicle, "Not all restaurants back suit over Healthy S.F." by Heather

Knight, March 22, 2009

- KALW Public Radio, “A restaurant owner who thinks differently” by Ben Trefny & Todd Whitney, March 10, 2015
- Hoodline, “10 Years In, Zazie Owner Jennifer Piallat Still Puts Employees First” by Fernando Pujals, May 29, 2015

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

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

- 941 Cole Street

**Recommended by Applicant**

- Interior brick wall original to the pre-1906 schoolhouse that stood on the site
- 1940s skylights
- Mural
- Garden patio
- American and French cuisine

**Additional Recommended by Staff**

- None





# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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

HEARING DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2019

*Filing Date:* October 9, 2019  
*Case No.:* 2019-020087LBR  
*Business Name:* Zazie Restaurant  
*Business Address:* 941 Cole Street  
*Zoning:* NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial Cluster) Zoning District  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 1272/003  
*Applicant:* Jennifer Bennett Piallat, Owner  
941 Cole Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Vallie Brown  
*Located In:* District 5  
*Staff Contact:* Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625  
[shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org](mailto:shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org)

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**ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR ZAZIE RESTAURANT CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 941 COLE STREET, BLOCK/LOT 1272/003.**

**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 20 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history and identity of Cole Valley and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; 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 November 6, 2019, 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 Zazie Restaurant for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 20 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 Zazie Restaurant.

***Location(s):***

- *941 Cole Street*

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

- *Interior brick wall original to the pre-1906 schoolhouse that stood on the site*
- *1940s skylights*
- *Mural*
- *Garden patio*
- *American and French cuisine*

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

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs** its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2019-020087LBR to the Office of Small Business November 6, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: