

Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE AUGUST 12, 2019

YASUKOCHI'S SWEET STOP

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-064
Business Name: Yasukochi's Sweet Stop
Business Address: 1790 Sutter Street
District: District 5
Applicant: Hatsuye Yasukochi
Nomination Date: May 17, 2019
Nominated By: Supervisor Vallie Brown
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is a bakery located within the Super Mira grocery store in Japantown. Opened by husband and wife Hisao Thomas "Moses" Yasukochi and Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi on December 18, 1974, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has remained in the same location for all of its 45 years of operation. Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has been written up in many articles over the years and is mostly known for their ever-popular original Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake.

Moses Yasukochi was born in 1937 in San Francisco and has lived in the City his entire life except for the Japanese imprisonment years during World War II. At 18 years old, he attended a retail baking class at San Francisco City College, which at the time had a very popular culinary program. While going to school, Moses held a part-time job at a bakery at the Stonestown Mall and also worked cleaning at Delee's Bakery on Irving Street. After graduating, Moses worked at Eickle's Bakery (at 18th and Geary) before getting drafted into the U.S. Army. Moses then became a baker at Fort Ord (1960- 1962). After the Army, Moses went back to working at Eickle's Bakery until one of the bakers at Eickle's (Ralph Harms) and Moses partnered together to buy a bakery called "Antoine's" in Lakeside Village on Ocean Avenue.

It was at Antoine's that Moses learned a very popular coffee crunch cake recipe from Tony, the previous owner of Antoine's, who used to come and help out at the bakery. Tony was the candy maker (and coffee crunch maker) who previously worked at the very popular Blum's bakery in Union Square where the original "Koffee Krunch Kake" was started by Ernest Weil and his brother, who ran Blum's at the time. It was Tony who shared the famous recipe with Moses.

Moses worked at Antoine's for seven years until a friend (Kaz Nakamoto) invited him to open up his own bakery within a new building that housed the grocery store "American Fish Market." It was then that Moses and Hatsy made the leap and decided to open up their own bakery, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop.

Yasukochi's Sweet Shop is located on the northeast corner of Sutter and Bush streets in the Japantown neighborhood.





SAN FRANCISCO
OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

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

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

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, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

1790 Sutter Street from 1974 to Present (45 years)

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

Yes, Yasukochi's Sweet Shop has contributed to the history and identity of the Japantown 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:

- Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is one of the few remaining Japanese-owned businesses in Japantown and their most famous cake, the Coffee Crunch Cake, is a staple for many locals and tourists alike visiting Japantown.
- The property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status codes of "C" (No Historic Resource Present) because of the building's age (constructed 1974).
- Yasukochi's Sweet Shop has been published in numerous newspaper articles, Japantown tours, and other literature:
 - Square's Legacy Project, Featuring Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, 2019.
 - San Francisco dessert experiences you need to try at least once (SF Chronicle, May 3, 2018).
 - Lost San Francisco dishes you thought you might never taste again (SF Chronicle, Feb 27, 2018).
 - A Brief History of the Coffee Crunch Cake (Nob Hill Gazette, Oct 1, 2017).
 - A Classic Cake Lives On (The New Fillmore, June 4, 2017).
 - A May 12, 2016 Nichi Bei Weekly article in which Yasukochi Sweet Stop was honored with an award from the National Japanese American Historical Society as a longtime Japantown business.
 - 50 Things You Need to Eat in San Francisco Before You Die (Thrillist, June 18, 2015).
 - San Francisco's 7 Best Cakes, Ranked (7x7, September 4, 2014).
 - This Japantown Coffee Cake has Sold Out for Decades (Zagat, Feb 26, 2014).
 - Tom Yasukochi perfects coffee crunch cake (SF Gate, Nov 6, 2011).
 - Best Cake, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, Food & Drink, San Francisco (SF Weekly, May 28, 2008).
 - Yasukochi's Sweet Stop - Food Network.

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

Yes, Yasukochi's Sweet Shop is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Yasukochi's Sweet Stop 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:

- Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake.
- Donation of the "Welcome Royalty" cake annually at the Cherry Blossom Festival.
- Weekly support of community via pastry donation to Buddhist Church of San Francisco and Kimochi Senior Nutrition Program.
- Location within Japantown.

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.

- Bakery.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Yasukochi's Sweet Stop currently located at 1790 Sutter 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 AUGUST 12, 2019

YASUKOCHI'S SWEET STOP

LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. _____

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Application No.:</i> | LBR-2018-19-064 |
| <i>Business Name:</i> | Yasukochi's Sweet Stop |
| <i>Business Address:</i> | 1790 Sutter Street |
| <i>District:</i> | District 5 |
| <i>Applicant:</i> | Hatsuye Yasukochi |
| <i>Nomination Date:</i> | May 17, 2019 |
| <i>Nominated By:</i> | Supervisor Vallie Brown |
| <i>Staff Contact:</i> | Richard Kurylo legacybusiness@sfgov.org |

ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR YASUKOCHI'S SWEET STOP, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1790 SUTTER 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 August 12, 2019, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

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

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

BE IT RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Yasukochi's Sweet Stop 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 Yasukochi's Sweet Stop:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake.
- Donation of the "Welcome Royalty" cake annually at the Cherry Blossom Festival.
- Weekly support of community via pastry donation to Buddhist Church of San Francisco and Kimochi Senior Nutrition Program.
- Location within Japantown.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Yasukochi's Sweet Stop on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Bakery.

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

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –





SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

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

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2018-19-064
Business Name: Yasukochi's Sweet Stop
Business Address: 1790 Sutter Street
District: District 5
Applicant: Hatsuye Yasukochi
Nomination Date: May 17, 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? X Yes No

1790 Sutter Street from 1974 to Present (45 years)

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

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

NOTES: N/A

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: June 20, 2019

Richard Kurylo
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program



**Member, Board of Supervisor
District 5**



City and County of San Francisco

Vallie Brown

Friday May 17, 2019

Office of Small Business
Small Business Commission
City Hall, Suite 110
San Francisco, CA 94102

To whom it may concern:

I write to nominate Yasukochi Sweet Shop, located at 1790 Sutter Street, for the Legacy Business Registry Program.

For over 40 years, Yasukochi Sweet Shop has sold its world famous Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake inside of Super Mira market in Japantown. Since 1974, neighbors, Bay Area residents, and tourists alike have flocked to the bakery to experience the delicious freshly baked cakes, which sellout by 11:30 AM every day.

Yasukochi Sweet Shop and its owners, Tom and Hatsy Yasukochi have a legacy that spans decades of growth in Japantown and the surrounding City. Throughout their time in San Francisco, the Yasukochi's have stayed the course, remaining committed to the rich cultural heritage that pulses through Japantown. City residents and members of the Japanese American community depend on Yasukochi as their go-to bakery for celebrating birthdays and holidays. The couples' labor of love has yielded what some call "the most divine cake they have ever had the pleasure of enjoying". This is why they have received rave reviews for over 40 years and are widely regarded as a staple in San Francisco's Japantown merchant community.

Tom Yasukochi is a San Francisco native. He grew up in the Richmond District and studied the art of baking and in a number of establishments around the city. He and his wife Hatsy opened Yasukochi Sweet Shop in 1974. The bakery has been in operation ever since and it continues to be a hotspot for those looking for a one-of-a-kind sweet treat.

For these reasons, I wish to nominate Yasukochi Sweet Shop for the Legacy Business Registry Program. For any additional questions about Yasukochi Sweet Shop, please contact Nikki Yoshikawa by email at: nikkiyoshikawa@gmail.com.

Should you have any further questions related to this letter, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office at (415) 554-7630 or BrownStaff@sfgov.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vallie Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vallie" and last name "Brown" clearly distinguishable.

Vallie Brown
Supervisor, 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.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| NAME OF BUSINESS: | | |
| Yasukochi's Sweet Stop | | |
| BUSINESS OWNER(S) (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business) | | |
| Hisao Thomas "Moses" Yasukochi and Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi | | |
| CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS: | | TELEPHONE: |
| 1790 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 | | (415) 931-8165 |
| | | EMAIL: |
| | | |
| WEBSITE: | FACEBOOK PAGE: | YELP PAGE |
| Not applicable | https://www.facebook.com/Yasukochis-Sweet-Stop-109004692465776/ | https://www.yelp.com/biz/yasukochis-sweet-stop-san-francisco |

| | |
|--|--|
| APPLICANT'S NAME | |
| Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business |
| APPLICANT'S TITLE | |
| Owner | |
| APPLICANT'S ADDRESS: | TELEPHONE: |
| 1790 Sutter Street, San Francisco CA 94115 | (415) 931-8165 |
| | EMAIL: |
| | |
| SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER: | |
| 0489979 | |
| SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (If applicable): | |
| | |

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

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

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

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS: | ZIP CODE: | START DATE OF BUSINESS |
| 1790 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA | 94115 | 12/18/74 to present |
| IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS? | DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | 12/18/74 to present | |

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

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

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

HATSY HATSUYE YASUKOCHI 5/7/19

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature: *Hatsuy Yasukochi*

YASUKOCHI'S SWEET STOP

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.

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is a bakery located within the Super Mira grocery store at 1790 Sutter Street in San Francisco's Japantown. The bakery was started by husband and wife Hisao Thomas "Moses" Yasukochi and Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi on December 18, 1974. Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has been written up in many articles over the years and is mostly known for their ever popular original Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake.

Moses was born in 1937 in San Francisco and has always been a true local, living in San Francisco his entire life except for the Japanese imprisonment years during World War II. At 18 years old, Moses attended a retail baking class at San Francisco City College, which at the time had a very popular culinary program. While going to school, Moses held a part-time job at a bakery at the Stonestown Mall and also worked cleaning at Delee's Bakery on Irving Street. After graduating, Moses worked at Eickle's Bakery (at 18th and Geary) for about 5 years before getting drafted into the U.S. Army. Moses then became a baker at Fort Ord for 2 years (1960-1962). After the Army, Moses went back to working at Eickle's Bakery for 2-more years until one of the bakers at Eickle's (Ralph Harms) and Moses partnered together to buy a bakery called "Antoine's" in Lakeside Village on Ocean Avenue. It was at Antoine's that Moses learned a very popular coffee crunch cake recipe from Tony, the previous owner of Antoine's, who used to come and help out at the bakery. Tony was the candy maker (and coffee crunch maker) who previously worked at the very popular Blum's bakery in Union Square where the original "Koffee Krunch Kake" was started by Ernest Weil and his brother, who ran Blum's at the time. It was Tony who shared the famous recipe with Moses.

Moses worked at Antoine's for seven years until a friend (Kaz Nakamoto) invited him to open up his own bakery within a new building that housed the grocery store "American Fish Market." Mr. Nakamoto gave Moses a very reasonable deal to open up his bakery, one that was hard to refuse. It was then that Moses and Hatsy made the leap and decided to open up their own bakery, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, on December 18, 1974, in the heart of Japantown. This was the first and only location of Yasukochi's Sweet Stop.

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

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has not ceased operations in San Francisco since its founding in 1974.

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

Yes, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is a family owned business. The business was first started in 1974 by husband and wife Hisao Thomas "Moses" Yasukochi and Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi. Moses and Hatsy have 3 daughters: Stacey Nolan, Wendy Prigge and Erin Yamamura, who have all worked part-time at the bakery when they were younger. Moses retired from the shop in 2016, but Hatsy remains at the business, working alongside grandson Robert Kenji Yick (Wendy's son). Kenji graduated from The French Culinary Institute (now known as the International Culinary Center) in Campbell in 2011 and started working full-time at Yasukochi's Sweet Stop in 2013. Kenji is the third generation, and has been the primary baker for all of their cakes, cookies, pastries and Danishes ever since.

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

The original family of Yasukochi's Sweet Stop remains as the current owners, and the business has now expanded to the third generation within the same family. The ownership history of Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is as follows:

1974 to Present: Hisao Thomas "Moses" Yasukochi and Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi

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 verifying it has been in operation for 45 years 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 that houses Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is classified by the Planning Department as Category C, No Historic Resource Present / Not Age Eligible, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The building was constructed in 1974 after the San Francisco Redevelopment demolished many of the earlier buildings within Japantown.

CRITERION 2

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

Yasukochi's Coffee Crunch Cake is often on many "must eat" lists for San Francisco's sweets and has put Japantown on the map for many people who may not have come to the community otherwise. For many, it has become the sole reason why people and tourists make the trek to Japantown to taste or come back for this long time favorite! The Coffee Crunch Cake originated at Blum's bakery, which had one location in Union Square and another in Stonestown. The Blum's shops closed in the 1970s, but their famous, beloved Coffee Crunch Cake lives on in San Francisco's Japantown. Nostalgic locals in the know seek out Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, hidden inside the Super Mira Market.

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

Every April during the Cherry Blossom Festival in San Francisco, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop donates the "Welcome Royalty" cake for the reigning and new Cherry Blossom Queens court from San Francisco, Seattle, Hawaii and Los Angeles.

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

Yasukochi Sweet Stop has been featured in numerous newspapers articles, Japantown tours, and such. Here are some examples featuring Yasukochi Sweet Stop:

- **Square's Legacy Project**, Featuring Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, 2019
The Square Insights team was tasked with bringing a wide range of legacy business stories to the offices of Square. This project included a film and office installations in San Francisco, St. Louis, Atlanta and New York City featuring businesses with unique legacy stories to share.
- **San Francisco dessert experiences you need to try at least once** (SF Chronicle, May 3, 2018)
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/food/article/San-Francisco-sweets-cruffin-ice-cream-donuts-boba-12882643.php>
- **Lost San Francisco dishes you thought you might never taste again** (SF Chronicle, Feb 27, 2018)
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/food/article/Lost-San-Francisco-dishes-you-thought-you-might-12619994.php>
- **A Brief History of the Coffee Crunch Cake** (Nob Hill Gazette, Oct 1, 2017)
<https://nobhillgazette.com/a-brief-history-of-the-coffee-crunch-cake/>
- **A Classic Cake Lives On** (The New Fillmore, June 4, 2017)
<http://newfillmore.com/2017/06/04/a-classic-cake-lives-on/>
- A May 12, 2016 Nichi Bei Weekly article in which Yasukochi Sweet Stop was honored with an award from the National Japanese American Historical Society as a longtime Japantown business.

- **50 Things You Need to Eat in San Francisco Before You Die** (Thrillist, June 18, 2015)
<https://www.thrillist.com/eat/san-francisco/best-things-to-eat-in-sf-iconic-foods-bucket-list>
- **San Francisco's 7 Best Cakes, Ranked** (7x7, September 4, 2014)
<https://www.7x7.com/san-franciscos-7-best-cakes-ranked-1786921418.html>
- **This Japantown Coffee Cake has Sold Out for Decades** (Zagat, Feb 26, 2014)
<https://www.zagat.com/b/sweet-sensation-yasukochis-coffee-crunch-cake>
- **Tom Yasukochi perfects coffee crunch cake** (SF Gate, Nov 6, 2011)
<https://www.sfgate.com/magazine/article/Tom-Yasukochi-perfects-coffee-crunch-cake-2324036.php>
- **Best Cake | Yasukochi's Sweet Stop | Food & Drink | San Francisco** (SF Weekly, May 28, 2008)
<https://archives.sfweekly.com/sanfrancisco/best-cake/BestOf?oid=2203927>
- **Yasukochi's Sweet Stop** - Food Network
<https://www.foodnetwork.com/restaurants/ca/san-francisco/yasukochis-sweet-stop-restaurant>

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

Blum's was a bakery that originated in San Francisco in 1892, but gained most of its popularity in the 1950s and '60s. Master baker Ernest Weil worked at the Blum's in Union Square, where a failed candy experiment inspired him to create Blum's renowned Koffee Krunch Kake back in the 1940s. When an employee over boiled soft coffee candy, Weil smashed the hard coffee candy into pieces, and added it to the outside of his sponge and whipped cream frosting cakes creating the now famous cake. Weil later went on to open a bakery called "Fantasia Confections" in Laurel Heights where he also served his popular coffee crunch cake for over 41 years. After Ernest Weil retired, he used to come into Yasukochi's Sweet Stop to get a bucket of the coffee crunch toppings from Moses to bake the cake at home for his family.

Other notable famous people who have come into Yasukochi's Sweet Stop:

- Marc Benioff (CEO of Salesforce) would sometimes come into Yasukochi's Sweet Stop with his daughters because he said that his mom used to go to original Blum's.
- Senator Diane Feinstein comes in pretty often, and she especially likes the lemon crunch cake.
- Moses' dad Ray worked for Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi for about eight years as a house cleaner, so Congresswoman Pelosi has been to Yasukochi's Sweet Stop in recent years.
- Sam Choy, the popular Hawaiian chef.
- Amy Hill, actress on Magnum PI.

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

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop receives hundreds of orders for their Coffee Crunch Cake for the Thanksgiving and December holidays, and they have to bring in ex-workers and rent another refrigerator just to fulfill their orders every year. People call months in advance to reserve their cakes for the holidays. Yasukochi's Sweet Stop will sell over 200 cakes on Thanksgiving Eve and over 200 on Christmas Eve alone, in addition to the other days surrounding those holidays. It's quite a commitment that the Yasukochis have made to the community to ensure that everyone gets their favorite cake for their holiday traditions every year.

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop also helps out in the community in the following ways:

- Donates the Queen's "Royalty Cake" during the Cherry Blossom Festival annually.
- Donates Danishes to the Kimochi Senior Nutrition program on a weekly basis.
- Donates pastries to the Buddhist Church of San Francisco after service on a weekly basis.
- Provides a cake at a discount to the Hamilton Senior Center for their birthday celebrations.

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

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is a key business in Japantown. San Francisco's Japantown was the first, and remains the oldest, of the three remaining Japantowns in the United States. Established in the Western Addition right after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire from ethnic enclaves from South Park, Chinatown and the Mission, Japantown remains at the same location within the blocks bordering Octavia, Fillmore, Laguna and Geary. What was once about 40 blocks of Japantown is now only about 4 blocks. And what were businesses and properties primarily owned by Japanese Americans is now run mostly by non-Japanese owners. Due to the circumstances of WWII imprisonment in the '40s and redevelopment in the '60s and '70s, most Japanese Americans were displaced to other areas in the Bay Area or elsewhere. While many of the third, fourth and fifth generation Japanese Americans no longer live in Japantown today, it continues to hold immeasurable symbolic and cultural meaning. It is the place where Japanese Americans still come to for cultural and educational events. The streets in Japantown are the site for annual events such as the Cherry Blossom Festival, Nihonmachi Street Fair, Bon Odori, Sumo Events, etc., which bring the regional community together. And now alongside many of the Japanese businesses in Japantown, you will also find Korean, Chinese, Hawaiian and other Asian-based retail shops and restaurants. These days, the majority of patrons in Japantown are primarily not Japanese, but mostly represent the diverse population of San Francisco and its tourist industry. But Japantown still remains the unique place to get a taste of the Japanese culture, without having to take a trip to Japan.

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

Due to the Western Addition's redevelopment and removal of many Victorian homes and buildings in Japantown during the 1960s and 1970s by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, the building housing Yasukochi's Sweet Stop was reconstructed in 1974. Yasukochi's

was originally built as a small bakery inside the market called American Fish Market. Yasukochi's has remained in the same location, but two different markets have replaced the American Fish Market: Super Koyama, and then Super Mira (since September 2000 to the present day).

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

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop Coffee Crunch Cake is often the go-to cake brought to birthdays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Mother's Day, Father's Day and many other holidays and celebrations in San Francisco. The people in the community and city would be missing a huge tradition if it closed. Just read a few of the comments left on Yelp and Trip Advisor, and you'll see how well-loved Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is to so many people:

- *"Small, easily missed but the cakes taste better than cake shops with prettier cakes. These cakes are old school but perfectly executed"* (Yelp review 4/7/19)
- *"Coffee crunch cake is a MUST and the BEST. I've tried the crunch cakes from other bakers but they don't compare to sweet stop"* (Yelp review 2/19/19)
- *"They are famous for their coffee crunch cake! Give it a try. I'm sure you'll be back for more!"* (Yelp review 2/16/19)
- *"Yasukochi's hands down continues to bake off the same Blum's cake. Martha Stuart among others have tried to replicate it, but no it's not the same"* (Yelp review 12/28/18)
- *"Yes. This cake really is worth the hype"* (Yelp review 11/21/18)
- *"It's so good, thinking about it makes me wish I was in SF"* (Trip Advisor review 12/5/17)
- *"They seem to be best known for their coffee crunch cake, and for good reason--it is decadently divine!"* (Trip Advisor review 11/11/17)

CRITERION 3

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

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop's signature feature no doubt is its Coffee Crunch Cake, originally a Blum's bakery recipe. Sold in single slices, whole cake 8", quarter sheet, half sheet, three-quarters sheet and full sheet. The yellow cake layered with whipped cream and topped with crunchy coffee-flavored morsels is so airy and absolutely divine. If you don't get there in the morning, you'll find that both the cakes and single slices are often sold out.

Other popular baked goods at Yasukochi's Sweet Stop are the Lemon Crunch Cake (known to be Senator Diane Feinstein's favorite) or the jelly-roll-like chocolate cakes filled with plain whipped cream or fresh strawberry whipped cream. "Pake" (named because it looks like a pie and a

cake) is another favorite, which is yellow cake with custard filling, almond slivers on the side, whip cream and strawberry glaze on the top.

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 Yasukochi family keeps to the same recipe handed down from the Blum bakery, including using Folgers coffee (a legendary San Francisco brand of coffee) for the coffee crunch in their Coffee Crunch Cake. Grandson Kenji said they have used other types of coffee before, but it doesn't quite get the same great, distinct taste that Folger's coffee has always provided. It is even said that the Folger's family (grandchildren) come to buy the Coffee Crunch Cake at Yasukochi's Sweet Stop.

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.).

The market that houses Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has changed three times since it first built their bakery in 1974, but it has always remained in the same spot. The markets have changed names and ownerships, but Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has remained the same.

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.

Not applicable.









寿福

PHONE 931-8165

We will be closed for
vacation from August 1st until
August 15th.
We have prepared to your
deliciousness from August 1st.
We are sorry for the
inconvenience. Thank you
from the
Sweet Stop Bakery



YASUKOCHI'S

Sweet
Stop

PHONE 931-8165













YASUKOCHI'S SWEET STOP



CAKES BY NAME

BLACK FOREST
BOSTON CREAM PIE
BRAZIL
CAPPUCHINO
CHANTILLY
CHOCOLATE DREAM
COFFEE CRUNCH
FRUIT TORTE
HAWAIIAN DELIGHT
HAWAIIAN DOBASH
HAWAIIAN GUAVA
HAWAIIAN PASSION FRUIT
LEMON CRUNCH
PINEAPPLE SHORTCAKE
STRAWBERRY CRUSH
STRAWBERRY PAKE
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE



KIMUCHI
Spirit
A T E R O



Masao And Hatsy Yasukochi

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop

For Family Business Contributions

KIMUCHI

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, 100% Family Business Contributions

May 11, 2011



via

The AAA Traveler's Companion

On the Road



Snacks jam the shelves—and please patron Rei Kobayashi—at Uoki K. Sakai Co.

NEIGHBORHOOD

San Francisco's Japantown

» The area around Post and Buchanan streets has been called Nihonmachi, or Japantown, since the early 1900s. Today, it is home to about a thousand Japanese Americans, and the walkable five-block enclave—which encompasses a rambling indoor mall built in the 1960s—teems with noodle houses, sushi bars, and shops selling bamboo baskets and kimonos. Here are some highlights. (Area code is 415.)

■ A one-stop shop for origami enthusiasts, the **Paper Tree** carries close to 300 books on the craft, from *Sticky Note Origami: 25 Designs to Make at Your Desk* to Kunihiro Kasahara's sober *Origami Omnibus*. There's excellent paper, too. 1743 Buchanan St., 921-7100.

■ Looking for kabocha squash or enoki mushrooms? Perfectly fresh tuna? Traditional cookware? Find them all at the cluttered 100-year-old **Uoki K. Sakai Co.** grocery and fish market. 1656 Post St., 921-0514.

■ Sushi, sure. But spaghetti with calamari and kimchi? Make its acquaintance at **On the Bridge**, a mod café specializing in *yoshoku*,

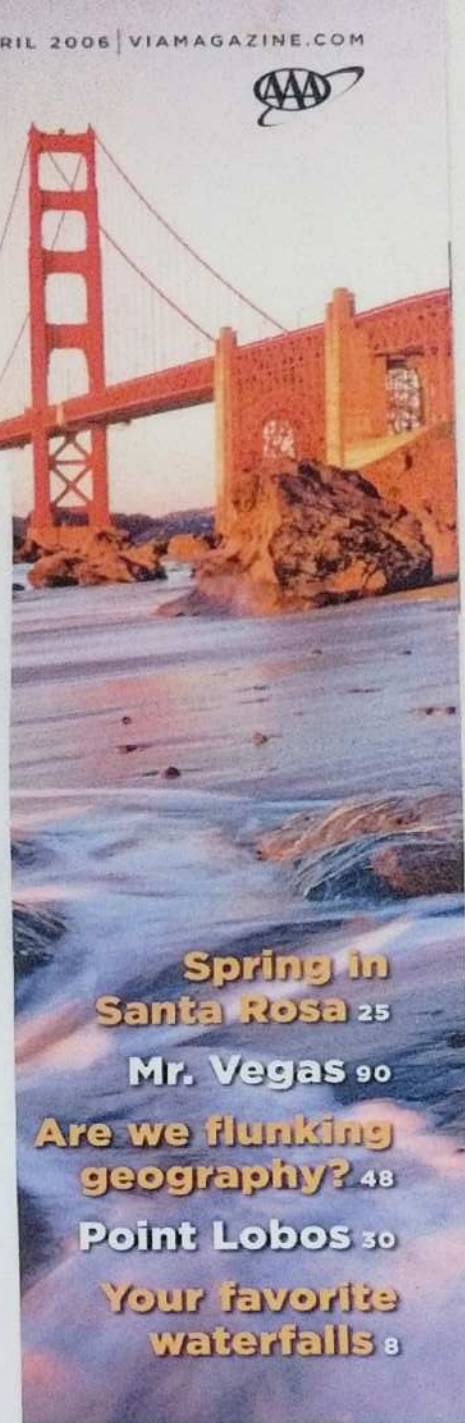
the kooky, strangely delicious Japanese take on Western dishes. 1581 Webster St., 922-7765.

■ The superb **Kinokuniya** bookstore stocks English-language titles on everything from Japan's gardens to its cinema, as well as a top-notch collection of translated novels and thousands of volumes in Japanese. 1581 Webster St., 567-7625.

■ For a splurge, look into **Kappa**, an unmarked 14-seat restaurant above Japantown's Denny's. Find exquisite multicourse meals featuring delicacies such as crab with green tea custard, fried stingray, and stewed baby abalone. 1700 Post St., 673-6004.

■ Devotees of the fluffy coffee-crunch cake at San Francisco's late, lamented Blum's will find the cherished dessert survives at **Yasukochi's Sweet Stop** inside the Super Mira market. 1790 Sutter St., 931-8165.

■ Whether you're on a quest for a handsome Meiji chest (\$5,400) or a classic wood-block print (\$120), or you just enjoy browsing through old furnishings, check out the selection at **Genji Antiques**. 22 Peace Plaza, No. 190, 931-1616. —JENNIFER REESE



**Spring in
Santa Rosa** 25

Mr. Vegas 90

**Are we flunking
geography?** 48

Point Lobos 30

**Your favorite
waterfalls** 8

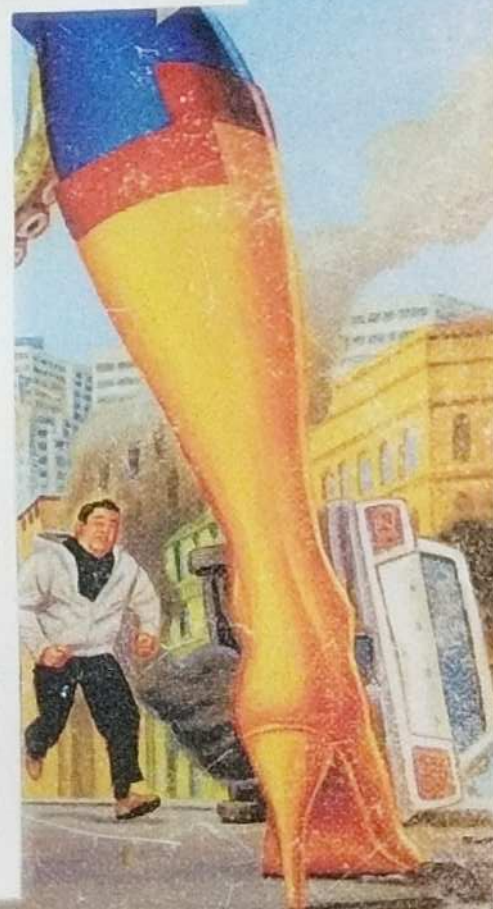
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BEST
SAN FRANCISCO**OF****'08!****SF**
WEEKLY**FOOD & DRINK****BEST**
2008**BEST CAKE****YASUKOCHI'S SWEET STOP**

1790 Sutter (at Buchanan), 931-8165

Longtime San Franciscans know that Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, a tiny bakery inside the Super Mira Market in Japantown, offers a cake that is said to duplicate the famous Coffee Crunch, one of the specialties of the vanished long-ago bakery-restaurant Blum's. Sold in single slices (\$2.95) or as a towering whole cake (\$25), the yellow cake layered with whipped cream and topped with crunchy coffee-flavored morsels is airier than the confection we remember — and it's also absolutely divine. If the coffee crunch is sold out (and it often is), you can't go wrong with the tangy, bright lemon crunch or the jelly-roll-like chocolate cakes filled with plain whipped cream or fresh strawberry whipped cream. Special orders don't upset them (they do a brisk business in birthday cakes). And the housemade coffee crunches are sold in small packages, if you want to attempt a Coffee Crunch on your own.



SFGATE

Tom Yasukochi perfects coffee crunch cake

PROFILE: Tom Yasukochi

By [Sam Whiting](#)

Published 4:00 am PST, Sunday, November 6, 2011



Photo: Russell Yip, The Chronicle

Tom Yasukochi, of Yasukochi's Sweet Stop Bakery, holds one of his trademark coffee crunch cakes on Wednesday, Oct. 5, 2011 in San Francisco, Calif.

Right about now, the orders start coming for [Tom Yasukochi](#)'s coffee crunch cake. To pick one up, you go into Super Mira Market in Japantown and make a hard right to Sweet Stop bakery.

At the counter is Hatsy Yasukochi, Tom's wife. She has a pink menu with a cable car logo from the long-closed Blum's restaurant that lists "Blum's Koffee Krunch Cake, 55 cents."

The spelling and the price are the only differences between the beloved original and the cakes that Tom Yasukochi, 74, bakes in back.

On longevity: This store opened in 1974. I was asked if I wanted to open a bakery in here. We're separately owned. The rent is divided. A lot of people can't find me because they don't know I'm in the store, and I don't have a very big sign.

On upbringing: Born and raised in San Francisco. I grew up in the Richmond, and I still live in the Richmond. I went to [Lowell High School](#), class of '55. We just had a reunion, and it was a blast. I played football, and the quarterback and the fullback were there.

On the Turkey Day Game: I played two years against Poly (Polytechnic) High at Kezar on [Thanksgiving](#) Day. I played defensive back. I was 5 feet 9 and 160 pounds. I played three years of varsity, and I think my dad came to my last game. He didn't understand football. Both of my parents were born in California but raised in Japan.

On remembering: As a kid we used to go to Blum's on Polk and California and the one in [I. Magnin](#). It was a big deal because Blum's cakes were wonderful, and it was a big treat for us when my mother would take us. I preferred the Lemon Krunch Kake, which I also make.

On learning the trade: We were sent to (internment) camp during World War II. We started at Tanforan and then went to a camp near Salt Lake City. During the relocation, my dad worked in the kitchen and did the baking.

On learning the secret: Before I came here, I was in a partnership on Ocean Avenue. The fellow I worked with used to make the candy for Blum's. It took me about a year working with him. He showed me how to get the temperature right.

On the holiday crunch: For Thanksgiving, I do more crunch cake than I do pies. The orders start coming at the beginning of November, and I have some of my ex-workers come in and help me. We're talking in the neighborhood of hundreds of crunch cakes for Thanksgiving.

On passing the test: The daughter of the original Blum (owner) came in. She lived in Texas and heard about it. She tried it and said, "My God, it's the same thing." She took the cake and said, "If you're ever in Dallas, come to Neiman Marcus. My name is [Susan Marcus](#). Come looking for me, and I'll take you out to lunch."

On passing it along: My grandson, [Kenji Yick](#), has been helping me all summer. He's starting culinary school this month. He's learning how to make crunch cake. It will take him at least four or five years to become an expert at it.

- Sam Whiting, swhiting@sfchronicle.com.



San Francisco's 7 Best Cakes, Ranked

By Brock Keeling

Sep 04, 2014

Superior to the twee and frosting-heavy cupcake, the solitary cake towers above its tiny flanker. In fact, wise people even say that the cake is better than pie. Here are our favorite slices in San Francisco, ranked.



7. Victoria Pastry Company's Princess Cake

The Princess Cake is the best reason to stop in at Victoria Pastry Company in North Beach. The custard, the creme, the cake, and the texture of the marzipan make this one of the best sovereign cakes in all the land. *700 Filbert*

6. Miette: The Tomboy

Named for its feminine yet unpolished look, Miette's Tomboy — featuring layers of buttercream, made the European way using Italian meringue and adding Straus butter, added to double chocolate cake slices — makes for a complex, not-too-sweet treat. Our favorite is the summertime raspberry. *449 Octavia*

5. B. Patisserie: Vanilla Cassis Cake

There's a reason Belinda Leong's marriage of vanilla mascarpone, Sablé Breton, cassis ganache, chiffon cake, and vanilla glacage costs \$7 a slice. Check out her Pacific Heights store to find out why. *2821 California*

4. Tout Sweet: Mille crepe

Yigit Pura's Fifth Element cake is as gorgeous as it is delightful to eat. However, the *Top Chef: Just Desserts* winner's Mille Crepe is what we make a beeline for when shopping in Union Square. This masterpiece, featuring layers of thin crepes sandwiched into a cake, gets high marks for its simplicity and delicate taste. Best eaten right away. *170 O'Farrell*

3. Schubert's Bakery: Swedish Princess Cake

Yes, the darling cake gets a second appearance on the list. A San Francisco classic, Schubert's Princess Cake tempts with white cake layers with raspberry and kirsch custard filling, whipped cream, and marzipan icing. This one ranks higher than Victoria's since, well, it always seems to make an appearance on your author's birthday table. *521 Clement*

2. Park Tavern: Birthday cake

One need look no further than the new Oreo or M&M flavors to know that birthday cake is having a moment. Arriving to your table with a pin-thin candle (psst, you don't need to order this when it's your actual birthday; that's part of its whimsy), this cake changes flavors daily depending on pastry chef's Emily Luchetti whim. *1652 Stockton*

1. Yasukochi's Sweet Stop: Coffee Crunch Cake

Locals know something that line-waiting, designer coffee-sipping, transplant foodies don't: Yasukochi's Sweet Stop's Coffee Crunch Cake is the best, period. The star of this massive gem is the coffee crunch candy surrounding the outside, with light layers of cake and whipped cream tying it together beautifully. Not for those who lack a high-tolerance sweet tooth or, insipidly, find flourless chocolate cakes the highlight of a dessert menu. To find one, head over to Super Mira Market in Japantown and hit up the Sweet Stop Bakery. *1790 Sutter*

KONKO CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO

金光教サンフランシスコ教会

1909 BUSH STREET

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115-3204

Richard Kurylo
Legacy Business Program
City and County of San Francisco
Office of Small Business
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110
San Francisco, CA 94102

May 24, 2014

Dear Mr. Kurylo,

On behalf of the Konko Church of San Francisco, it is my pleasure to write this letter to strongly support Yasukochi Sweet Stop's application to the City's Legacy Business Registry. During redevelopment in San Francisco's Japantown, our church with an 89 year legacy, was rebuilt in 1973, just one year prior to family run business owners Moses & Hatsy Yasukochi opened their Sweet Stop in 1974, 45 years ago.

They are a long time community member just around the corner from us, and they have been playing an interwoven role in our church's history of joyful occasions (such as birthdays, Senior Appreciation Days, weddings, baby showers, and we plan to order a fresh strawberry cream-filled cake for next weekend's 6/2 Spring Grand Ceremony & 30th Spiritual Birthday of our third head minister).

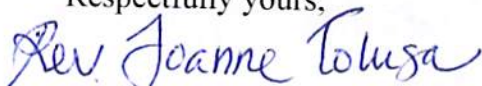
Since their opening, they have generously donated various goods and gift certificates for our 40+annual Summer Festival Bazaars. As the secretary of the Japanese American Religious Federation (JARF) of San Francisco interfaith group, I can also testify to Moses' and Hatsy's generosity for providing gift certificates as benefit prizes for our 14+ annual Curry Cook-off.

We appreciate all Moses & Hatsy Yasukochi do as truly generous supporters to us and many community groups and events in the Japantown area. The quality of their ingredients are unsurpassed. Their cakes have a delicious, unique, distinct taste that is not too sweet and matches the taste of cakes in Japan. Only recently more American bakeries have less sweet cakes, but the Yasukochis were pioneers for making delicious cakes that are not too sweet throughout the years, since their inception.

They are the "go to" bakery located in Japantown for fresh fruit, high quality cakes, as well as their famous coffee and lemon crunch cakes. We appreciate all they do, including their warm greetings, assisting customers of all ages in both English and Japanese.

As head minister of the Konko Church of San Francisco, I wholeheartedly recommend Yasukochi Sweet Stop to the Legacy Business program, which I believe they are so deserving of

Respectfully yours,



Rev. Joanne Tolosa, Head Minister
Konko Church of San Francisco



May 14, 2019

Mr. Richard Kurylo
Legacy Business Program
City and County of San Francisco
Office of Small Business
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 110
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: *Letter of Support for Yasukochi's Sweet Shop*

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

It is with pleasure that I offer a letter of support for Yasukochi's Sweet Shop as a Legacy Business in San Francisco's Japantown.

Owners, Moses and Hatsy Yasukochi have been generous supporters of Kimochi for over 47 years and continue to donate baked goods every Thursday to our senior lunch program.

In 1974, Moses and Hatsy opened Yasukochi's Sweet Shop serving their signature Coffee Crunch Cake amongst other mouth-watering desserts, pastries, and cookies. This family owned business and their sense of community has continued to this day supporting many community organizations such as Nihonmachi Little Friends, San Francisco Buddhist Church and Japanese Cultural Community Center of Northern California just to name a few.

Just as important, for as long as I've known them (43 years), Moses and Hatsy have provided job opportunities for the young and old, hiring and training people from the community. Personally, once he heard that my son was going into the culinary field, he had made it a point to seek out and talk about the culinary business, all-the-while offering encouragement. Now currently, my son is a chef at a well-known Japanese restaurant.

As the needs of communities increase, contributions from a community business like Yasukochi's Sweet Shop are especially appreciated and welcomed.

Sincerely,

Steve Ishii
Executive Director

Kimochi, Inc.
1715 Buchanan Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
Fax (415) 931-2299
www.Kimochi-Inc.org

• *Administration*
(415) 931-2294

• *Social Services*
(415) 931-2275

• *Volunteer Services*
(415) 931-2294

• *Club Nikkei*
(415) 931-2294

Kimochi Home
1531 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 922-9972
Fax (415) 922-6821

• *Adult Social Day Care*

• *Residential Care*

• *Respite Care*

Kimochi Senior Center
1840 Sutter Street
Issei Memorial Hall
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 931-2287
Fax (415) 931-2299

• *Nutrition*

• *Home Delivered Meals*

• *Senior Center Activities*

• *Transportation*

Kimochi Lounge
1581 Webster Street #202
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 563-5626
Fax (415) 931-2299

• *Information and Referral*

Filing Date: June 20, 2019
Case No.: 2019-013291LBR
Business Name: Yasukochi's Sweet Shop
Business Address: 1790 Sutter Street
Zoning: Japantown Neighborhood NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District)
Zoning District
50-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0675/039
Applicant: Hatsuye Yasukochi, Owner
1790 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
Nominated By: Supervisor Vallie Brown
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Jeff Joslin – 415-575-9117
Jeff.Joslin@sfplanning.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Yasukochi's Sweet Stop is a bakery located within the Super Mira grocery store in Japantown. Opened by husband and wife Hisao Thomas "Moses" Yasukochi and Hatsuye "Hatsy" Yasukochi on December 18, 1974, Yasukochi's Sweet Shop has remained in the same location for all of its 45 years of operation. Yasukochi's Sweet Stop has been written up in many articles over the years and is mostly known for their ever-popular original Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake.

Moses Yasukochi was born in 1937 in San Francisco and has lived in the City his entire life except for the Japanese imprisonment years during World War II. At 18 years old, he attended a retail baking class at San Francisco City College, which at the time had a very popular culinary program. While going to school, Moses held a part-time job at a bakery at the Stonestown Mall and also worked cleaning at Delee's Bakery on Irving Street. After graduating, Moses worked at Eickle's Bakery (at 18th and Geary) before getting drafted into the U.S. Army. Moses then became a baker at Fort Ord (1960- 1962). After the Army, Moses went back to working at Eickle's Bakery until one of the bakers at Eickle's (Ralph Harms) and Moses partnered together to buy a bakery called "Antoine's" in Lakeside Village on Ocean Avenue. Moses worked at Antoine's for seven years until a friend (Kaz Nakamoto) invited him to open up his own bakery within a new building that housed the grocery store "American Fish Market." It was then that Moses and Hatsy made the leap and decided to open up their own bakery, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop.

Yasukochi's Sweet Shop is located on the northeast corner of Sutter and Bush streets in the Japantown neighborhood. It is within the Japantown NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District) Zoning District and a 50-X Height and Bulk District.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded on December 18, 1974.

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

Yes. Yasukochi's Sweet Shop qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Yasukochi's Sweet Shop has operated continuously in San Francisco for 45 years.
- ii. Yasukochi's Sweet Shop has contributed to the history and identity of the Japantown neighborhood and San Francisco.
- iii. Yasukochi's Sweet Shop 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. Yasukochi's Sweet Shop is one of the few remaining Japanese-owned businesses in Japantown and their most famous cake, the Coffee Crunch Cake, is a staple for many locals and tourists alike visiting Japantown.

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

No.

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 "C" (No Historic Resource Present) because of the building's age (constructed 1974).

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

No.

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

Yes. Yasukochi's Sweet Shop has been published in numerous newspaper articles, Japantown tours, and other literature:

- Square's Legacy Project, Featuring Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, 2019
- San Francisco dessert experiences you need to try at least once (SF Chronicle, May 3, 2018)
- Lost San Francisco dishes you thought you might never taste again (SF Chronicle, Feb 27, 2018)
- A Brief History of the Coffee Crunch Cake (Nob Hill Gazette, Oct 1, 2017)
- A Classic Cake Lives On (The New Fillmore, June 4, 2017)
- A May 12, 2016 Nichi Bei Weekly article in which Yasukochi Sweet Stop was honored with an award from the National Japanese American Historical Society as a longtime Japantown business.
- 50 Things You Need to Eat in San Francisco Before You Die (Thrillist, June 18, 2015)
- San Francisco's 7 Best Cakes, Ranked (7x7, September 4, 2014)
- This Japantown Coffee Cake has Sold Out for Decades (Zagat, Feb 26, 2014)
- Tom Yasukochi perfects coffee crunch cake (SF Gate, Nov 6, 2011)
- Best Cake, Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, Food & Drink, San Francisco (SF Weekly, May 28, 2008)

- Yasukochi's Sweet Stop - Food Network

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 1790 Sutter Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake
- Donation of the "Welcome Royalty" cake annually at the Cherry Blossom Festival
- Weekly support of community via pastry donation to Buddhist Church of San Francisco and Kimochi Senior Nutrition Program
- Location within Japantown

Additional Recommended by Staff

- None



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No.

HEARING DATE: JULY 17, 2019

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

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

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Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Jeff Joslin - 415-575-9117
Jeff.Joslin@sfplanning.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR YASUKOCHI'S SWEET SHOP CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1790 SUTTER STREET, BLOCK/LOT 0675/039.

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on July 17, 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 Yasukochi's Sweet Shop qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 years or more 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 Yasukochi's Sweet Shop.

Location(s):

- 1790 Sutter Street

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Blum's Coffee Crunch Cake
- Donation of the "Welcome Royalty" cake annually at the Cherry Blossom Festival
- Weekly support of community via pastry donation to Buddhist Church of San Francisco and Kimochi Senior Nutrition Program
- Location within Japantown

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 2019-013291LBR to the Office of Small Business July 17, 2019.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: