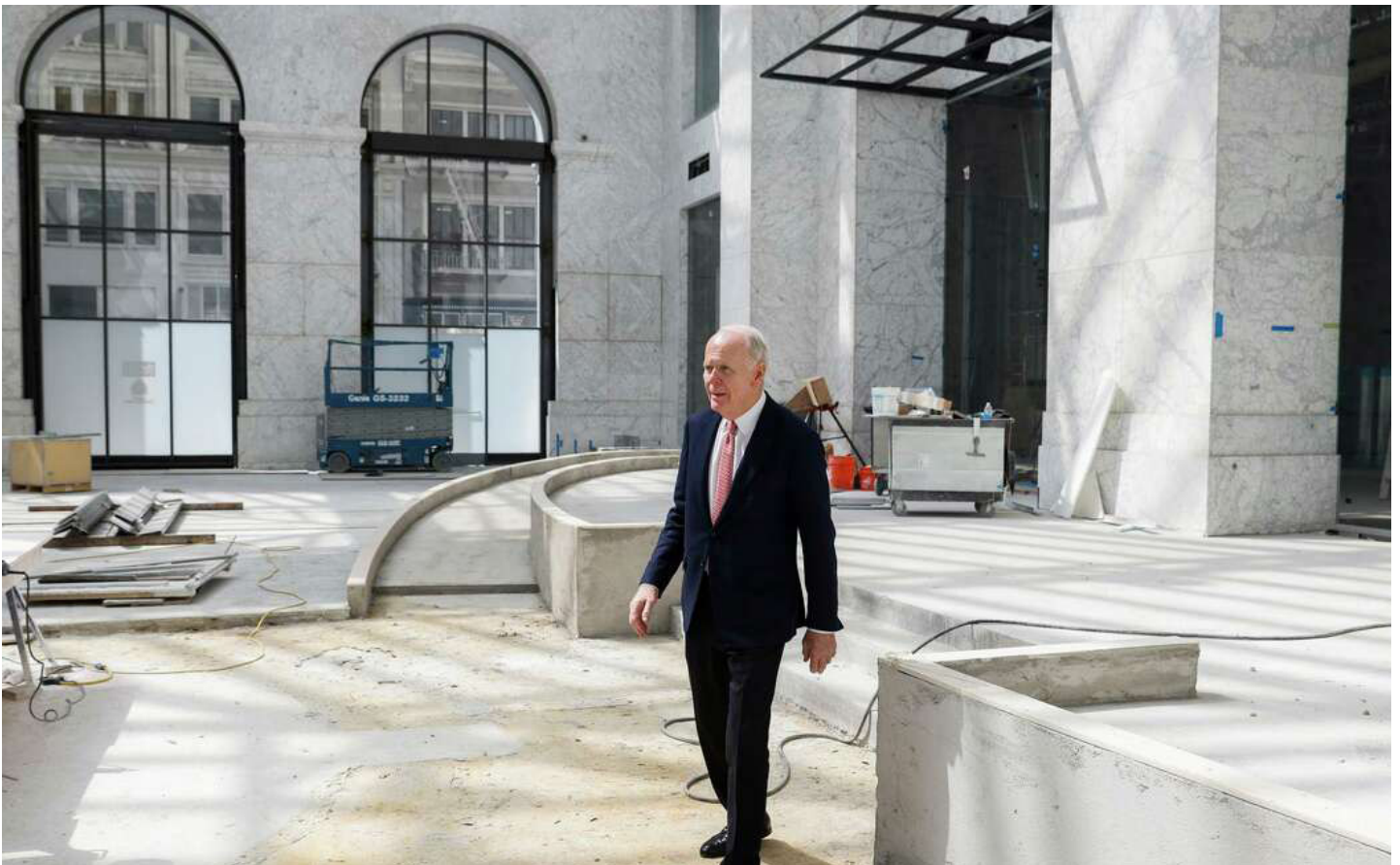


Bay Area & Business

Historic downtown S.F. space getting \$20 million makeover, new bar and restaurant

By Roland Li | May 17, 2022 Updated: May 17, 2022



Michael Barker owns Barker Pacific Group, which is redoing the century-old One Sansome Street building. Jessica Christian / The Chronicle

A century-old space next to downtown San Francisco's Montgomery BART Station is getting a \$20 million makeover for the pandemic age.

Barker Pacific Group, owner of One Sansome Street, is bringing a new bar, restaurant and private event space to the property's publicly accessible 1910 conservatory, in an effort to reinvigorate the area.

Renovations were planned before the pandemic, but have taken on more significance after foot traffic in the area plunged during the shutdown. Citibank, the anchor tenant of One Sansome's 42-story tower portion, also vacated five floors as its lease expired and the bank consolidated its offices elsewhere.

The investment in One Sansome is one of the biggest bets on downtown San Francisco after the \$250 million renovations planned at the Transamerica Pyramid, and both projects are focusing on hospitality, food and drink to lure both office workers and visitors looking for a good time.

One Sansome is no stranger to downturns. Barker Pacific Group and its partner PGIM bought the property out of foreclosure in 2010, with two floors vacated by defunct bank Bear Stearns. The owners have since invested more than \$100 million in the building and it was fully leased by 2015 as the city's economy recovered strongly.

Leasing activity is picking up, and the tower is now around 88% leased.

Michael Barker, CEO of Barker Pacific Group, has worked in San Francisco since 1983 and is optimistic about another resurgence.

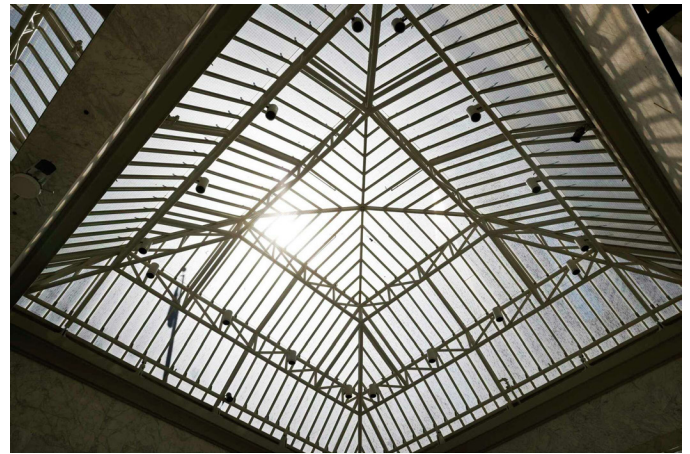
"We've had some rough times, and we've had some boom times. And I think the uptick is coming," Barker said.

Last fall, real estate brokerage Newmark leased the top 32,000 square feet of the tower, which includes a penthouse bar. The company also took over leasing for the property.

A half-dozen smaller tenants have also signed new leases this year, including consultancy Egon Zehnder, investment company HIG Capital and law firm Pachulski, Stang, Ziehl & Jones. Asking rents at the top floors, which have views of the Golden Gate Bridge, are around \$100 per square foot, near the top of the city's market.

Michael Brown, vice chairman of Newmark, said One Sansome's transformation will be "unlike anything the market currently offers."

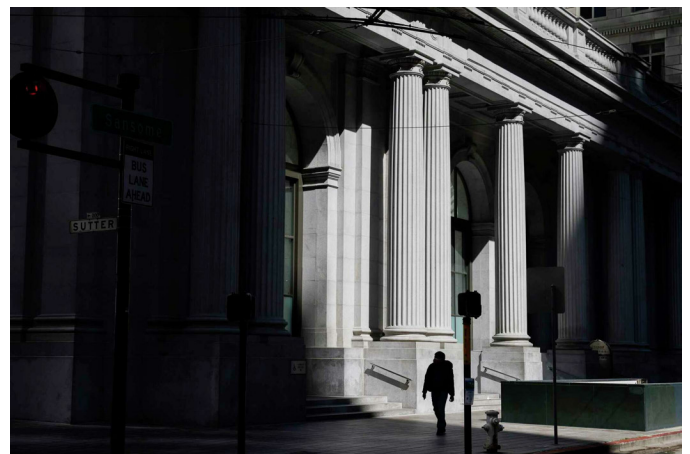
The ground floor restaurant and bar is led by Phil Spiegel, head of newly formed Please Fidi and a veteran of the Julia Morgan Ballroom and the Merchants Exchange Club.



A glass roof towers over the main lobby level space at One Sansome Street in the Financial District of San Francisco. Jessica Christian/The Chronicle



A rendering of the new conservatory under construction at One Sansome Street in downtown San Francisco. LightFiction



A pedestrian walks past the facade of One Sansome Street in the Financial District of San Francisco. Jessica Christian/The Chronicle



Phil Spiegel (left) of Please Fidi and Michael Barker of Barker Pacific Group walk through the site of the future event space, bar and restaurant at One Sansome Street in the Financial District of San Francisco. Jessica Christian/The Chronicle



Michael Barker, owner of Barker Pacific Group, looks out from the 41st floor of One Sansome Street in the Financial District of San Francisco. Jessica Christian/The Chronicle



A rendering of a tenant amenity space planned at One Sansome Street in downtown San Francisco. LightFiction

It will be called Holbrook House, after the historic building that is now the conservatory, and serve high-end American food.

Spiegel envisions future commuters witnessing a space “like you’re looking at Gatsby’s mansion, and there’s a party going on and you’re wondering what’s happening. And you’re looking through, you’re seeing this beautiful space, and you’re seeing activity, and it’s fun, and it’s active.”

He hopes to open the restaurant and bar by early next year and create around 40 full-time jobs, offering business breakfast and lunch, where Spiegel sees little competition in the area, as well as happy hours and dinner.



A rendering of the new bar at One Sansome Street in downtown San Francisco. LightFiction

The event space will hold around 2,000 people, making it an alternative for people who don’t want to be in hotels. Spiegel said.

“We are embracing the Financial District,” Spiegel said. “It’s going to be where people drink martinis and sip Champagne and feel very good about it. We want the restaurant and bar to match the opulence of the building.”

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