



# JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE

日本町の経済発展・計画・保存

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING & PRESERVATION OF JAPANTOWN

## NOTES FROM THE CULTURAL HERITAGE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE

1765 SUTTER STREET

MONDAY, January 6, 2020

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sandy Mori, Jacquelyn Chew, David Takashima, Seiko Fujimoto, Jeremy Chan

### STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Nakajo, Nina Bazan-Sakamoto

### OTHERS PRESENT:

Karen Kai, Derek Tamara, Marina Masami, R. Martinez., Ros Tonai

- I. The meeting began at 6:00 p.m.
- II. Approval of the September 9 and October 7 minutes
  - a. Jacquelyn moved and Jeremy seconded to approve the September and October minutes. They were approved.
- III. Report from Nina Sakamoto on update of the Cultural District Project.
  - a. Nina reported on the Cultural District and how the daytime Town Hall meeting attracted a different crowd.

She reported that the CHHESS report has begun to be drafted. There will be an internal written draft ready by March. Steve Nakajo clarified that this would also be shared with the Board via a verbal narration.

The Grand Launch event will be at the JCCCNC from 3pm-5pm on Saturday April 11, during the first weekend of the Cherry Blossom Festival. It will be a performing arts presentation of relevant topics. There may be an open call for artists around this theme, but the idea is still in development. Cherry Blossom already rents the hall and sound system, so they will be donating that in-kind to the Cultural District initiative.

The draft for the MOHCD monitor will be available by June. They will have the summer to revise it before sending it to the Board of Supervisors.

They are setting up appointments with key community members to collect their input. They are also developing a focus group for young adults.

Steve said that the Bayview Cultural District is now being expanded to include the Western Addition. They also added a Native American Cultural District, and Chinatown will be added soon. Steve will be meeting with a Chinatown Arts

collective to discuss how Japantown started our Cultural District. JTF has also shared job descriptions for consultants, etc. with other districts.

There will be a third town hall meeting in the fall. The CHHESS report will be a living document. Because CHHESS is an extension of JCHESS, JTF is taking the original proposed strategies and incorporating them into the CHHESS report.

JTF is working on additional legacy businesses (Japan Video, T. Okamoto & Co.), as well as the visitor kiosk in the mall.

Steve said the CHHESS report has a maximum of 15 pages; this comes from the City. They wanted specific, targeted, and concise findings. The City prefers a visual roadmap type of document. JTF is discussing adding an addendum to log all of the feedback to serve as a resource.

Steve is aware that the City is looking at a two year cycle, with a possibility of additional funding. The City organized and required District staff to attend workshops about how to sustain the Cultural District after the funding expires. The City stressed to rely on corporate / private funding and not the City. The Mayor has been asking departments to cut their budget due to the deficit.

IV. Open discussion on invitation to individuals /organizations on cultural issues; the Japanese speaking community; the arts and artists in the Japanese American community. What is the best way to outreach in San Francisco and Greater BayArea?

- a. David asked Nina what staff needs and how the committee can support. Nina asked for support in organizing a focus group on cultural heritage / arts and culture. Sandy said that the committee could help assemble a short list for the focus group.
- b. There was discussion around making sure there was a variety of attendees for focus groups for full representation of the types of groups that exist. Nina said that in the public release, they would like to emphasize this call for diversity. Nina also said that she'll be developing a list of questions in advance, and prioritize topics to be talked about.
- c. There was discussion about what could be included in the CHHESS versus an addendum to provide additional context to the document and critical to sculpting the community's future plans.
- d. There was public comment about how arts and culture encompasses a huge range of groups and suggestion for smaller bites to make it easier for artists / art groups to go in depth. Using themes that have come up over time as an anchor for focus group discussions. Invitations can be targeted around these topics.
- e. It was decided that the committee would help with creating a focus group on Arts and Culture on February 3 in lieu of the normal CHSC meeting. Nina also said it would be helpful for the committee to help map out cultural assets in the greater Bay Area, such as the East Bay, as well as build out their contact base.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- I. Design guidelines
  - a. Sandy reported that the Planning Commission voted to approve the Design Guidelines, and that the planning commission staff will continue to help do outreach for the guidelines.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Marina introduced herself as a user researcher at Google and an acquaintance of David and Coco. She is interested in supporting the focus group and highlighted the utility of surveys for engagement.

R. Martinez introduced herself as from City College, where there is strong Japanese language program. She commented on wanting to create more ways to engage with students.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

The next meeting will be the Arts & Culture focus group at 6:00 p.m. Monday, February 3, 2019 at the JACL HQ.