

Japantown Task Force
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
6:00 pm – VIA zoom Meeting

Attendees: Sandy Mori, Beau Simon, Lucy Fisher, Glynis Nakahara, Benh Nakajo, Alice Kawahatsu, Elena Nielsen, Jeremy Chan, Kenta Takamori, Mark Moriguchi, Richard Hashimoto, Rosalyn Tonai, Scott Hamaguchi and Seiko Fujimoto

Absent (excused): David Takashima, Jon Osaki, Daryl Higashi

Staff: Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka, Brandon Quan, Nina Bazan-Sakamoto, and Natasha Tamate Weiss

Guests: Grace Horikiri, James Chou, Sheridan Tatsuno, Karen Kai, Michiko Yamada, and Emily Glick

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

II. Approval of minutes

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of September 16, 2020.

It was moved by Glynis Nakahara and seconded by Lucy Fisher to accept the minutes from the August meeting (Attachment A).

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

Approval of Agenda:

It was moved by Lucy Fisher and Richard Hashimoto

The motion passed unanimously.

Board Comment: Benh wanted to know the update on the CPMC Japantown Parking garage situation.

III. Update from the Executive Director, Steve Nakajo (Attachment B)

Additional information was provided on the CPMC item. Richard Hashimoto clarified that CPMC will be cancelling 840 monthly parking passes effective November 30th. The Japan Center Garage has started new programs to retain some of the CPMC employees by selling parking passes for \$180 a month and reloadable 200.00 debit cards for any of the parking fees in collaboration with SFMTA. CPMC will be cancelling the shuttle from the Japan Center Malls to the Van Ness hospital campus. However, if the CPMC employees complain, they may be able to retain this.

Update from the Japantown Cultural District, Nina Bazan-Sakamoto (Attachment C)

Nina reported that MOHCD is now requiring a new shorter format for the CHHESS report. The team will meet to reformat and refine the contents of the report. The new project associate, Natasha Tamate Weiss introduced herself to the JTF Board. Time frame for the team to meet back with Julia is before the holidays. Board comment: Is there a way we can see the other Cultural District documents that MOHCD is asking JTF to follow? What can the city do for the Cultural District? More specific to tie into key areas.

Update from the 2020 Census Project, Brandon Quan (Attachment D)

No public comments.

Update from Executive Director of Japantown Community Benefit District (Property Owners in Japantown), Grace Horikiri (Attachment E)

Grace reported that the JCBD monthly board meeting has moved to the 4th Wednesday of every month. The next meeting is October 28th 5-6pm. JCBD will be having a Japantown walkthrough with San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), San Francisco Fire Department and SF Recreation and Parks Department that

focuses on the SafeCity Camera Program on October 23rd. JCBD has invited Chief Scott for walkthrough and meet merchants on October 28th. The Heart of Jtown Resiliency Fund has raised \$504,660 as of October 21st. JCBD has given \$5,000 grants to 80 small businesses in Japantown. The Gofundme campaign will be open until the end of this year. There are more car break-ins in Japantown.

Homeless Program at the Hotel Buchanan

President Sandy Mori reported that she met with the Liason of the hotel program and they will continue to operate at least to the end of the year. The program is looking at permanent supportive housing for their homeless residents. Café Mums is still closed as they cannot open until the Homeless Program ends.

Public Comments:

- The Hotel Buchanan is not for sale. Café Mums is deciding whether to open or not given that shabushabu is not allowed to be served indoors.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Nominations Committee (Chair Richard Hashimoto)

1. Recommendation to renew Glynis Nakahara to the JTF Board for a 3-year term; term expires in 2023

The Committee is recommending to renew Glynis Nakahara to the JTF Board for a 3-year term. Richard Hashimoto announced that he will be taking a one year leave of absence for personal reasons in December 2020. His term ends at the end of this year. The committee still needs to fill Jacquelyn Chew's seat so if the board has any recommendations, send your suggestions to Richard.

It was moved by Kenta Takamori and seconded by Lucy Fisher to renew Glynis Nakahara to the JTF Board for a 3-year term.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

B. Land Use/Transportation Committee (Co-chairs, Glynis Nakahara/Kenta Takamori)

1. Committee Updates

Sutter Street Improvements

Glynis Nakahara reported that the Sutter Street improvements were approved and SFMTA will move forward with the road diet after analyzing the expanded white zones. On the 1619 Laguna Street Variance, there has been no decision on the illegal residential unit on the ground floor from the Zoning Administrator. Regarding Neighborhood Pedestrian Safety, the committee has been advocating with SFMTA and communicating with SFPD to put mitigation in place in order to improve pedestrian safety. A Congestion Pricing community meeting was held on October 15th with San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA). SFCTA gave an overview of the proposal for congestion pricing. The boundary cuts off on Laguna Street.

C. Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee (Chair David Takashima)

1. Recommendation to approve Lucy Fisher as co-chair of the committee

The Committee is recommending to the JTF board to approve Lucy Fisher as the co-chair of the committee.

It was moved by Glynis Nakahara and seconded by Rosalyn Tonai to approve Lucy Fisher as co-chair of the committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

Public comments:

- A comment up on if the CHS committee will have the JTF Board write a letter supporting the nomination of 1830 Sutter Street for city landmarking.

D. Peace Plaza Committee (Co-Chairs, Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

1. Updates on Proposition A, the \$487.5 million Health and Homeless, Parks and Streets Bond for the November 3rd ballot
Japantown is part of a citywide campaign for Yes for Proposition A, which includes the \$25million for the Peace Plaza. The Prop A campaign has raised almost \$2 million. This proposition requires 2/3rds vote. Community members can pick up window posters and door hangers from Richard at this office in the Japan Center Garage. JTF staff sent a notice to board members for Prop A volunteer opportunities at SF farmers markets, and Golden Gate Park. The next meeting will be October 27th 5pm.
2. API United for Yes on A Final Rally on October 15th at City Hall
There was an API United for Yes on A held a final rally on October 15th. Three of the parks in this proposition are from 3 API communities: South of Market, Chinatown and Japantown. The turnout at city hall was great.
3. Expansion Joint Renovation
The SF Recreation and Park Department has delayed the project because they have been meeting with the contractor and design engineer. The department has started ordering some materials. Once the materials arrive, the department will start construction. The construction will last 3-4 weeks. In the beginning of Nov, there will be chain link fencing on the sides of the Plaza.

V. Update from the President and Executive Committee

1. Update on the Ad Hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee held on October 13, 2020
Sandy reported that the Ad Hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee had their monthly meeting and invited Pat Flanagan, owner of the Kabuki AMC building. Mr. Flanagan is very supportive of Japantown. Grace Horikiri of JCBD and Greg Vilorio of the Japan Center Malls gave an overview of their work.

According to the JTF bylaws, a board member must resign if he or she misses 3 consecutive meetings or have been absent for more than 50% of all board meetings during a calendar year. Currently, we do not have any board member who fall into these categories.

VII. Announcements

1. Honoring George Yamasaki by the Human Services Commission
George Yamasaki was honored by the Human Services Commission on September 24. He is longest serving commissioner in the history of SF. He has served and been appointed by every mayor since Mayor Alioto.

The following public announcement was shared:

- The Issei Women's Building will be one of the buildings highlighted in a program sponsored by SF Heritage on October 22nd 6-7pm titled "Exploring Gender, Race, and History at San Francisco Asian American Site."

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 via zoom meeting.