

**Japantown Task Force
Board of Directors Meeting**
Wednesday, November 17, 2021
6:00 pm – VIA Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Sandy Mori, Glynis Nakahara, Benh Nakajo, Alice Kawahatsu, David Takashima, Beau Simon, Gary Barbaree, Jeremy Chan, Jon Osaki, Kenta Takamori, Lori Yamauchi, Lucy Fisher, Richard Jue, Rosalyn Tonai, Steven Santa Maria, Daryl Higashi, and Mark Moriguchi

Absent (excused): Richard Hashimoto and Scott Hamaguchi

Staff: Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka, Brandon Quan, Susie Kagami, Melissa Bailey Nihei, and Max Nihei

Guests: Julia Sabory, Aaron Orcino, Alex Katzen, Andre Sibayan, Andrew Kodama, Desi Danganan, Elena Nielsen, Emily Nichols, Grace Horikiri, Jimmie Gabiola, Katie Furukawa, Michiko Yamada, Satoe Haile, Yuki Nishimura, Jackie Funasaki

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Gary Barbaree and seconded by Rosalyn Tonai to accept the agenda.

The motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of October 20, 2021. (Attachment A)

It was moved by Lori Yamauchi and seconded by Steven Santa Maria to approve the October 20, 2021 minutes.

The motion passed with unanimously. No public comments.

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

Steve Nakajo gave an update on the Economic Impact Report. The Economic Impact Report was created to stop the sale of Buchanan Hotel. It was commissioned by Katsura Gardens owner, Greg Lee and his associate, Alex Koch. Applied Analysis compiled and wrote the data and findings for the report. Once completed, Greg Lee will donate the report to the JCBD and it will be accessible to the public.

No public comments.

“Japantown CHHESS Process and Approval Update” Presentation by Special Guest, Julia Sabory, Cultural District Manager from the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD)

Julia Sabory introduced herself to the JTF Board and gave an update on the Japantown CHHESS. The CHHESS Report is a co-authored report between the city departments and the community. The SF Planning, SF Arts Commission, Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (MOEWD) and MOHCD departments are all very supportive and have signed off on the community strategies. SOMA Pilipinas will present their CHHESS Report to the Board of Supervisors first and Japantown would be right after. The timeline has been delayed for the city to agree on SOMA Pilipinas' report, which pushed the timeline for Japantown back. Julia plans to meet with the Japantown Cultural District staff during the first week of December. Japantown's CHHESS report is expected to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in February 2022.

No public comments.

“Japantown’s Co-Creative Hub: Reviving an Arts Community” – Presentation by Special Guest, Desi Dangagan, Plinth Agency Executive Director

Susie Kagami introduced special guest, Desi Dangagan. Desi introduced the Plinth Agency team: Aaron Orcino, Andre Sibayan, Jimmie Gabiola & Alex Katzen. Susie introduced the Japantown Co-creative hub team: Satoe Haile and Andrew Kodama. The Japantown Cultural District has been working with Plinth Agency on the co-creative hub since July. The team is working with Plinth Agency on building an online presence and plans to open it by the end of this year. Desi gave a presentation on the multi-generational community hub. The next steps will be to look for funding and finding a space to house a physical hub.

No public comments.

Update from the Japantown Cultural District, Susie Kagami (Attachment C)

Susie Kagami introduces Melissa Bailey Nihei, the new Program Coordinator to the JTF Board. Melissa Bailey Nihei introduced herself to the Board.

No public comments.

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

Grace Horikiri added that Japantown hasn't seen too much retail theft neither in the daytime nor the nighttime. More cases have been spiking for smash and grab with vehicles. Many break-ins happen during the day.

No public comments.

IV. Committee Reports

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

1. Recommendation to reject the proposal from the SF Planning Department as written to redefine Formula Retail as “11 or more locations worldwide, excluding any locations in Japan.”

Glynis Nakahara reported the committee had a discussion on the SF Planning Department's Formula Retail proposal. Kenta Takamori mentioned that the department brought up a proposal asking our feedback of whether Japantown would be interested in a different formula retail rule than the current existing rule. The proposed rule would be any retail shops with 11 or more locations worldwide, excluding Japan, would trigger neighborhood notices, hearings and community engagement. With a 5-4 vote, the committee voted to reject the proposal from the SF Planning Department. The committee wants to work with the city on an alternative language and processes that would facilitate more authentic Japanese businesses. The board members had several questions and decided to postpone this item.

No public comments.

2. Committee Updates

Sutter Buchanan Muni Shelter

Former JTF board member Clint Taura reached out to the committee to replace the shelter.

SFMTA

Glynis reported the #2 bus line has been partially restored. The #3 bus line has not been restored yet. Bus revisions might include covering parts of the #3 line. More community outreach from SFMTA will take place in the near future. There was a rally outside City Hall in response to many communities speaking out about bus lines needing to be added back prior to the pandemic. Seniors, disabled, and students as well as some JTF LandUse committee members spoke out as well.

Osaka Way Improvements

The funding will be funneled through the SF Planning Department, not OEWD. Board member Jon Osaki mentioned that the community is in the process of securing the funds from the state to the city. A meeting with the state will be held next week.

Japantown Preservation and Development Plan

Board member Lori Yamauchi is spearheading this plan and drafted a charter and protocols.

No public comments.

B. Cultural Heritage Sustainability Committee (Co-chairs David Takashima/Lucy Fisher)

1. Kenta Takamori: Update on Japantenna

Kenta Takamori reported that there was a launch event on Nov. 8. The Consul General of Japan and D5 Supervisor were in attendance. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs awarded a grant of \$111k. The San Francisco Council of Districts Merchants Association represented by Richard Hashimoto, President of Japantown Merchants Association, increased their donation from the original \$10k to \$20k. Total awarded is \$131k. The soft opening for the Japantenna was held on Nov. 11, 12 and 13. There were over 1,200 visitors. Kenta announced will have a ribbon cutting ceremony on Nov.20. It will be

about 30 minutes. The Consul General of Japan and Mayor Breed will be speaking. Different prefectures have begun approaching the Japantenna committee. Board member Beau Simon suggested giving informational brochures for visitors to take home.

Public comments:

- What type of programming will there be at the Ribbon Cutting ceremony?
- Keep in mind about crowd control. Have security presence and follow COVID protocols.

2. Recommendation to the full Board to confirm Gary Barbaree as Co-Chair of the CHSC Committee

It was moved by Lucy Fisher and seconded by David Takashima to approve Gary Barbaree as the Co-chair of the CHSC Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

No public comments.

3. Committee's Discussion of Focus Areas for 2022

Lucy Fisher reported that the committee is looking at the focus areas for next year, which includes the J-town cohort focus groups and CHHESS Report.

No public comments.

C. Peace Plaza Committee
Rich Hashimoto)

(Co-Chairs Jon Osaki/

1. Committee Updates

Jon Osaki reported the Department of Public Works and the Recreation and Park Department are still in the process of completing the structural analysis of the Peace Plaza. They are concerned that if there is too much weight on the Peace Plaza, it could trigger a seismic upgrade, which is something they'd like to avoid.

The next committee meeting may be cancelled next Tuesday.

No public comments.

D. Ad Hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee
Yamauchi)

(Chair Lori

1. Committee Updates

Sandy Mori reported that the committee wanted to set up a meeting with Joaquin Torres, City Assessor on a strategy for the malls. The committee will decide what questions to ask him before inviting him to a future meeting. The next meeting will be on Monday, Dec. 2. Lori Yamauchi and Sandy met with Paul Osaki on his covenants committee to coordinate with each other.

No public comments.

E. Nominations Committee
Nakajo)

(Chair Benh

1. Vote to approve new 3-year terms for Directors who term out in 2021

The new 3-year terms for Directors who term out in 2021 are Jeremy Chan, Scott Hamaguchi, Alice Kawahatsu, Sandy Mori, Mark Moriguchi, Benh Nakajo, Jon Osaki, David Takashima, and Lori Yamauchi. The latest board roster (Attachment E) has each Directors new term. The terms of the new Directors were selected by a lottery system. If a board member wishes to change their 3-year term, they can switch with someone else who has a shorter term.

It was moved by Benh Nakajo and seconded by Beau Simon to approve of the new 3-year term for Directors who term out in 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

No public comments.

2. Vote to approve the Nominations Committee list of names for Board Officers and Positions

The list of names of Board Officers and positions are President Sandy Mori, Vice President Glynis Nakahara, Secretary Alice Kawahatsu, and Treasurer Mark Moriguchi. An additional 2 names were submitted. However, with the transition of the hiring of a new Executive Director, the Nominations Committee felt that there needs to be a strong experience of board members to support the new Executive Director. One of the two names submitted their application after the deadline had passed.

It was moved by Benh Nakajo and seconded by Lucy Fisher to approve of the list of names for Board Officers and Positions. The motion passed with 16 in favor and 1 opposition.

No public comments.

3. Vote to approve the nominations of Yuki Nishimura as a JTF Board member
Yuki Nishimura introduced herself to the Board. (Attachment F) She will start in January 2022.

It was moved by Benh Nakajo and seconded by Lucy Fisher to approve of Yuki Nishimura as a JTF Board member. The motion passed unanimously.

No public comments.

F. Finance Committee
(Chair Mark Moriguchi)

(Chair Mark Moriguchi)

1. Presentation of the July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 Year End Profit and Loss Statement

Mark Moriguchi presented the July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 Profit and Loss statement to the board. (Attachment G) There were questions on JCYC's pension plan and cultural district meetings. Jon Osaki clarified that all JCYC employees are eligible for a 403b retirement plan and it is an opt-in program.

No public comments.

G. JTF By Laws Working Group (Sandy Mori, Kenta Takamori, Mark Moriguchi & David Takashima)

1. Consideration of Approving Proposed Revisions to the JTF ByLaws
Kenta Takamori sent the latest revision to the JTF ByLaws. (Attachment H) Kenta clarified that the Nominations Committee has the discretion to decide if the committee wants to present 1 or more candidate to the board for officers.

It was moved by Lucy Fisher and seconded by Jon Osaki to adopt the proposed revisions to the JTF ByLaws. The motion passed unanimously.

No public comments.

VI. Update from the President/Executive Committee

1. Update on the Hiring Process/Procedures for the JTF ED Position
Sandy gave an update on the Hiring committee. The Hiring committee members are Alice Kawahatsu, Glynis Nakahara, Rosalyn Tonai, Mark Moriguchi, Jon Osaki, Jeremy Chan, and Beau Simon. The board approved of the Hiring committee at the Oct. 20 board meeting. The deadline for applications is Dec. 1. There have been 3 candidates with potentials to be hired as the next Executive Director. Board member Jon explained the Hiring committee has not determined if all applicants are qualified for the job. The Hiring committee will discuss and bring 1 or multiple candidates for interviews with the full board. Board member Glynis mentioned that the committee will provide details and keep the board updated. The Hiring committee will bring the candidate(s) to the board at the closed session meeting for interview(s) on Dec. 15. The regular board meeting will be cancelled. The JTF committees will send updates to the board by email in lieu of the regular board meeting being cancelled.

VIII. General Public Comment

Members of the public may address the Board for up to two minutes with respect to each item on the agenda, and may speak for up to two minutes regarding matters not on the agenda during general public comment.

No public comments.

IX. Announcements.

- Glynis Nakahara announced that the California College of the Arts has their urban design studio art exhibit on display at NJAHS until Nov. 20.

- Alice Kawahatsu announced the We Are One, a personal safety & self-awareness workshop to stop AAPI violence and hate will be held on Nov. 20 at 1:30pm-3:30pm at JCCCNC. The Mayor and Consul General are expected to attend.

- Jon Osaki announced that on Dec. 3 is hosting a joint collaboration with the Booker T. Washington Community Service Center and show a film screening on Jon's film: Reparations. It will be an in-person event from 6-7:30pm.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57pm.

NEXT BOA