

**Japantown Task Force**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
Wednesday, January 20, 2021  
6:00 pm – VIA zoom Meeting

**Attendees:** Sandy Mori, Glynis Nakahara, Scott Hamaguchi, Alice Kawahatsu, Beau Simon, Daryl Higashi, David Takashima, Elena Nielsen, Lucy Fisher, Jeremy Chan, Kenta Takamori, Lori Yamauchi, Benh Nakajo, Jon Osaki, Mark Moriguchi, and Richard Jue

**Absent (excused):** Rosalyn Tonai, and Seiko Fujimoto

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

**Guests:** Richard Hashimoto, Karen Kai, Gary Barbaree, Michiko Yamada

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

**Approval of Agenda:**

It was moved by Lucy Fisher and seconded by Lori Yamauchi to accept the agenda.

The motion passed unanimously.

**II. Approval of minutes**

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of December 16, 2020. (Attachment A)

The minutes were amended to correct the Stakeholders legislation requires vintage high rise buildings, not village high rise buildings under the Land Use/Transportation committee updates.

It was moved by David Takashima and seconded by Daryl Higashi to accept the minutes from the December meeting.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

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

Steve Nakajo provided additional information for his Executive Director Report. JTF is a member of the API Council and submits an annual addback request to Cally Wong, API Council Executive Director. Through the addback mechanism, JTF was awarded \$25,000 from Supervisor Preston for the Visitor Center Kiosk. JTF was awarded \$107,000 from the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development (MOEWD), which left JTF in a budget deficit of \$74,000. The \$25,000 from Supervisor Preston was added to the \$107,000 baseline allocation for a total of \$132,000. JTF used the Japantown Cultural District one-time funds to fulfill the shortfall budget deficit of \$49,000. The Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) Cultural District one-time funds were approved in January 2021. There were allocations for Kinmon Gakuen event space and Visitor Center Kiosk in the one-time funds. These funds were redirected towards the shortfall budget of \$49,000. The SF Japantown Foundation grant request was written to go towards the JTF budget deficit and the Peace Plaza Project. JTF received an award of \$15,000. The award letter emphasized for continued work on the Peace Plaza. The remaining balance from FY 19-20 the SF Japantown Foundation grant will be used to hire a Peace Plaza Consultant.

The 1st Consul General focus group targeted towards "next generation" young professionals will be held on March 4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> focus group will be March 18 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> group is April 1. There 3 focus groups of 10 individuals each. The facilitator will be Susie Kagami. The Japantown Cultural District team held their first artist meetup on January 22. There were about 25 attendees. The team has started a collaboration with the Japantown Community Benefit District for a Small Business Assistance Center. The team is also rolling out a Cultural District logo.

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

The applicants in the Seeding Reciprocity Transformative Grant-writing program successfully submitted their applications to the SF Arts Commission Artist Grant in December. Grant award is \$20,000 for each applicant. The applicants will find out if they have been awarded in May 2021.

The team posted a Marketing job position on indeed.com, received 20 applications, and is going through each application. The team will be meeting with Desi Danganan from Kultivate Labs for website development and building a platform.

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

The JCBD marketing meetings are open to the public and the agenda is posted on the JCBD website.

**IV. Committee Reports**

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

1. Committee Updates

SF Climate Action Plan

The City is updating their SF Climate Action Plan. The LUT committee is requesting a community meeting with the SF Climate Action Plan. Based upon the outcome and attendance of the community meeting, a second meeting may be considered.

SFMTA

There will be a new crosswalk, the Geary Median Project at Buchanan and Geary St. with a tree in the middle. The tree has to be removed in order for the project to be successful. The public can issue a complaint to remove the tree until February 10. If a complaint is made, there will be a hearing.

Congestion Pricing

The committee is trying to set up a congestion pricing meeting for either March or April.

SF Housing Element

The committee is looking into scheduling a community listening session for the Housing Element for either February or March.

California College of the Arts

The committee is talking with the California College of the Arts to collaborate on the advanced urban design studio around public comment and reimagining the ground floor. An initial meeting will be scheduled between February 11-15. After that, workshops will be open for the greater community to attend.

LUT Priority and Goals

The committee began discussing their priority and goals for the coming year.

No public comments.

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

1. Recommendation to approve Lori Yamauchi as a member of the CHS Committee

It was moved by Jon Osaki and seconded by Beau Simon to approve Lori Yamauchi as a member of the CHS Committee.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

## 2. Committee Updates

Lucy Fisher reported that the committee agreed to support the Japantown Cultural District's 4 strategies: 2 short-term and 2 long-term projects.

No public comments.

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

### 1. Update on the Expansion Joint Renovation

Richard Hashimoto announced that the expansion joint was completed on the week of January 18.

### 2. Committee Updates

The next Peace Plaza Committee meeting will be held on January 26. The meeting items are updates on an active consultant for the design process, the SF Japantown Foundation grant, applying the grant resources towards design and construction phases of the project. The SF Japantown Foundation has been supporting JTF on the Peace Plaza Project and been investing funds to JTF for the past 5 years.

No public comments.

## D. Nominations Committee

### 1. Updates on Filling Board Slots

Benh Nakajo reported that the Nominations Committee is looking for new board member candidate to fill Elena Nielsen's slot and hope to submit a new candidate by the next board meeting on February 17. Lori Yamauchi replaced Jacquelyn Chew. Richard Jue replaced Richard Hashimoto.

Richard Jue introduced himself to the Board.

No public comments.

## V. Update from the President and Executive Committee

### 1. Update on the Ad Hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee held on January 11, 2020

Sandy Mori reported that the committee had a brainstorming session to discuss their ideas and strategies. Each member was asked to answer 3 questions: why they care about Japantown and the malls, what skills do they bring to the committee, and what ideas do they have about the malls. If anyone would like to watch the video recording, contact JTF staff member, Lauren Nosaka.

### 2. Executive Committee recommends Mark Moriguchi to serve on the Nominations Committee

It was moved by Lucy Fisher and David Takashima to approve Mark Moriguchi to serve on the Nominations Committee.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

## VII. Announcements

JCBD is planning to host COVID19 testing in the Peace Plaza for the dates of January 28, February 4 and February 11 from 9am-3pm. JCBD is working on a pre-registration site with the City and will send that information through their newsletter.

Steve Nakajo gave a deep appreciation to Elena Nielsen and Richard Hashimoto for their service on the JTF Board.

Elena Nielsen announced Mifune in the West Mall on the bottom floor is closing permanently. They are trying to sell their cookware so please stop by if you are in Japantown.

Jon Osaki shared JCYC's projects:

- JCYC started raising funds for emergency assistance to some of the families they are serving several months ago, primarily for food security. Parents lost their jobs and did not have enough to feed their families. JCYC raised \$30,000-\$40,000 from Safeway and other sources. JCYC is launching large committee campaign for families that are struggling right now.
- February is black history month. JCYC will announce a new scholarship specially dedicated to African American children and youth. The scholarship will be named after Tamatra Scott.

Alice Kawahatsu acknowledged the new President Biden and Vice-President Harris. A moment of silence was held for families that are struggling with COVID.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 via zoom meeting.