

Japantown Task Force
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, December 16, 2020
6:00 pm – VIA zoom Meeting

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

Absent (excused): Kenta Takamori, and Seiko Fujimoto

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

Guests: Derek Tahara, Emily Glick, Grace Horikiri, Karen Kai and Michiko Yamada

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by President Sandy Mori. A quorum was acknowledged.

Approval of Agenda:

It was moved by Alice Kawahatsu and seconded by David Takashima to accept the agenda.

The motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of minutes

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of November 18, 2020. (Attachment A)

The minutes were amended to add that CCA stands for California College of the Arts under the Land Use/Transportation Committee updates and to clarify that the Peace Plaza RFP (request for proposal) is for contractors.

It was moved by Glynis Nakahara and seconded by Richard Hashimoto to accept the minutes from the November 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 gave a presentation to the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Northern California (JCCNC) on the CHHESS report and discussed future collaboration on CHHESS projects with JCCNC. It was the first time the Japantown Cultural District met with JCCNC staff. JTF staff submitted an RFP for the SF Japantown Foundation for a maximum award request of \$15,000. If awarded, the \$15,000 will go towards infrastructure for the next fiscal year's JTF budget deficit. Steve and President Sandy Mori are working on a possible collaboration with the Consul General of Japan's staff person, Jaclyn Funasaki, on a focus group for the next generation young professionals. The focus group is projected to be held in January or early February. Jaclyn is researching for next generation young professionals in the community to be involved in this focus group. JTF President Sandy Mori gave an overview of possible names of people and organizations whom would be invited to participate. Possible people and groups: Natasha Weiss, Kiyomi Tanaka, Nakayoshi group, Japantown for Justice, Kimochi, CB Festival group.

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

Nina Bazan-Sakamoto reported that she contacted over 30 Executive Directors in the community in order to gain an understanding on which strategies they view as broader priorities for Japantown, which strategies aligns with their mission, and to identify areas of potential collaboration. She met with 7 of them in the past month and will follow up with the remaining in 2021 New year. She will provide a summary of her meetings with the Executive Directors.

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

Grace Horikiri reported that Captain Yep of Northern Police Station arrested the individual who has been harassing the Community Ambassadors. Brandon Quan added that the individual was arrested for a separate charge and is in police custody. The individual has tried to initiate an altercation with the Community Ambassadors a few times.

Note: At the time of the JTF Board meeting, the December JCBD updates were not ready yet.

IV. Committee Reports

- A. Land Use/Transportation Committee (Co-chairs, Glynis Nakahara/Kenta Takamori)
 - 1. Recommendation to add Lori Yamauchi, JTF Board Member, to the LU/T Committee

It was moved by Benh Nakajo and seconded by Rosalyn Tonai to add Lori Yamauchi, JTF Board Member, to the LU/T Committee.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

- 2. Recommendation for LU/T Committee to enter into collaboration with CCA (California College for Arts) advanced urban design studio: Common Ground: Remaking the Ground Floor

The collaboration is being led by Christopher Roach and Julia Grinkrug. The focus of the studio will be an extension of their fall studio to reimagine the urban ground floor given post-pandemic world. The Committee is seeking approval for the LU/T Committee to collaborate with the design studio.

It was moved by Lori Yamauchi and seconded by Lucy Fisher to approve the LU/T Committee to enter into collaboration with CCA advanced urban design studio if opportunities aligns with JTF CHHESS and Common Ground: Remaking the Ground Floor.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

- 3. Committee Updates

Neighborhood Stakeholders

Glynis Nakahara reported that the committee is seeking information with the Cathedral Hill Neighborhood and other neighborhood groups on legislation that is being sponsored by Supervisor Peskin. The legislation requires village high rise buildings to be fully sprinklered. A letter has been sent requesting a meeting with Supervisor Peskin and copied to D5 Supervisor Preston.

Senior Zones

SFMTA has established senior zones that will reduce speed to 25 miles per hour, and upgrading the cross walk by brightening the lights between Post and Octavia St. Alice Kawahatsu, LU/T Committee member, added that senior zone signs are up on Geary St. in both directions. She is trying to have SFMTA park the large warning signs of the change in speed limits on the Geary corridor. She asked that both pedestrians and drivers be more aware as it is now getting darker earlier.

Housing Element

Glynis reported that the committee is seeking a community listening session with the SF Planning Department on the Housing Element in the new year. The committee will organize with JTF staff to schedule a date for the meeting.

No public comments.

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

1. Updates

Lucy Fisher reported the committee discussed their priorities, CHHESS strategies and projects, and which tactics fit into the CHS Committee at the last monthly meeting on Dec. 7, 2020. David Takashima is investigating the CARES Act and how businesses can apply for funds through this Act. He is also looking into the Cultural District legislation at the state and federal levels. Little Tokyo and San Jose Japantown is included in the Cultural District legislation bill. He will be contacting the staff at the Cultural District state legislation. The Cultural District federal legislation has not been done yet.

No public comments.

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

1. Updates

Richard Hashimoto reported that he met with Omar Smith who is the Project Manager of the Expansion Joint Construction. The construction will take place from Dec. 16 to Dec. 18 from 4am to 9am. During that time, the only way to enter the Peace Plaza is from Geary St. via stairs. The new expansion joint should fix some of the water leaks into the Japan Center Garage. They were able to use blow torches to dry surface for some areas that were wet from the recent rains.

Richard added that there have been no updates on the Peace Plaza Projects and does not see any updates from the city until January.

D. Nominations Committee (Chair Richard Hashimoto)

1. Recommendation to approve Richard Jue as a New JTF Board Member, the 3-year term from Jan. 2021 through Dec. 2023.

Richard Hashimoto introduced Richard Jue (Attachment E). The Nominations Committee is recommending that Richard Jue be accepted as a board member. He will be assuming Richard Hashimoto's position beginning in Jan. 2021. It is a 3-year term from Jan. 2021 – Dec. 2023.

It was moved by Alice Kawahatsu and seconded by Jon Osaki to approve Richard Jue as a New JTF Board Member.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

2. Updates on Filling Open Board Slots

Richard updated the JTF Board on the open board slots. Lori Yamauchi, accepted into the JTF Board last month, took over Jacquelyn Chew's slot and her term expires in 2021. The committee will need to fill Elena Nielsen's position who will be resigning in Jan. 2021. The committee is still accepting nominations for Elena Nielsen's slot. The committee will make a recommendation to the Board on a selected nominee at the Feb. meeting.

Elena Nielsen thanked the board and asked that the nominations committee consider finding someone to take her place who is a young adult and is really familiar with what is going on in Japantown. Two other board members agreed that the nominations committee look to have a balanced and broad cross section represented on the JTF board.

3. Recommendation to approve the 2021 Slate of Board Officers

Current Slate of Board Officers:

Sandy Mori, President
Glynis Nakahara, Vice President
Alice Kawahatsu, Secretary
Mark Moriguchi, Treasurer

The committee received a self-nomination after the last board meeting, review the nominee, and decided not to accept any self-nominations. He explained that there has to be a due process, in which nominations are made.

The committee will make the following recommendations to the Bylaws committee at the next amendment.

1. A Board member making the nomination must have a discussion with the nominee before they are presented to the Nominations committee, and that shall be properly vetted by the committee.
2. The nominee must be experienced with Japantown and experienced in a position that he or she is being nominated for.
3. Nominee must be unanimously accepted by the Nomination Committee.

The Bylaws committee will discuss these recommendations and bring it to the full board for approval. The bylaws state that the slate of officers should be selected by the end of the year.

Since Richard will be leaving the JTF board at the end of Dec. 2020, the Executive Committee will discuss who will replace Richard on the Nominations committee.

It was moved by David Takashima and Daryl Higashi to approve the 2021 Slate of Board Officers.

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

E. Finance Committee

(Chair Mark Moriguchi)

1. Revenue and Expense Report July 2019 – June 2020 – for information only

Mark Moriguchi reviewed the Revenue and Expense Report for July 2019 – June 2020 (Attachment F) He explained the budget doubled from 2019 to 2020 due to the Cultural District funding. The expenses listed as other includes rent, consultants and programs.

Board member GN requested a narrative of the report. For example: Rent, consulting, program expenses, etc.

No public comments.

V. Update from the President and Executive Committee

1. Update on the Ad Hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee held on December 14, 2020

Sandy Mori reported that Joaquin Torres from the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development has assigned 2 staff members: Ted Conrad & Anne Taupier to work on the future issues of the Japantown Malls. These 2 staff members will be meeting with the Community Covenants Committee. The Ad Hoc Japan Center Malls Technical Committee will be holding a brainstorming breakout session at the next meeting on Jan. 11, 2021.

VII. Announcements

- Lucy Fisher and Benh Nakajo, members of the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden, met with Phil Ginsburg, the General Manager of SF Recreation & Parks Department a few years ago. At that meeting, Phil said that the SF Recreation & Parks Department will fund \$2million in costs to repair the pagoda if the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden raises 15% of the funds. The Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden raised the funds and the pagoda is in a restoration phase. The painting of the pagoda is projected to be finished by April 2021. They will be fundraising again for a landscaping area around the pagoda and create a performance area to hold more cultural activities and performances.
- Richard Hashimoto congratulated Jon Osaki for receiving the Telly awards on his documentary, "Alternative Facts."
- Elena Nielsen is running her first fundraiser for the Center with Uji Time. Every purchase will receive 5% with the promo code: THECENTER2020. 10% of the proceeds will go towards the Center. The fundraiser will begin from now until Jan. 15.
- Kimochi is still looking for volunteers aged 18-59 years old to pack lunch for the seniors.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 via zoom meeting.