

**JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019  
6:00 PM – UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM  
1675 POST ST, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115**

**ATTENDEES:** Sandy Mori, Glynis Nakahara, David Takashima, Mark Moriguchi, Neal Taniguchi, Kenta Takamori, Beau Simon, Alice Kawahatsu, Jacquelyn Chew, Coco Tando, Rosalyn Tonai, Scott Hamaguchi, Clint Taura

**ABSENT:** Seiko Fujimoto, Jon Osaki, Benh Nakajo, Judy Hamaguchi, Richard Hashimoto

**STAFF:** Steve Nakajo, Lauren Nosaka, Nikki Yoshikawa, Max Loubet

**GUESTS:** Tomo Hirai, Jeremy Chan, Greg Viloría, Michiko Yamada, Elena Nielsen

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the JTF Board meeting of April 17, 2019.

The minutes were amended:

- Under SB50 in the Land Use/Transportation items, Glynis Nakahara pointed out that SB40 should be changed to SB4.

It was moved by Cco Tando and seconded by David Takashima to accept the minutes from the February 20 meeting (Attachment A.)

The motion passed unanimously. No public comments.

**III. UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STEVE NAKAJO**

Steve Nakajo reviewed the highlights from the May 15, 2019 Executive Director's report (Attachment B.) He reported that JTF submitted an RFP for the 2020 SF Census with a concept of hard-to-count outreach and education. JTF was awarded \$25,000 and will hire Wesley Nihei, a part-time staff person, for 12 hours a week and concentrate on the Japantown area. There will be a Census Advisory Committee held on May 31 by the API Council to discuss the citizenship question on the census and the digital form of the census. JTF consultant Steve Nakajima hand delivered the Cultural District RFP on April 26. Each of the 6 cultural districts were evenly funded. The work will focus on cultural heritage, housing aspects and tenant advocacy. Steve Nakajima and the Cultural Heritage Committee met prior to the submittal to discuss the RFP. JTF is currently interviewing candidates for the two positions of consultant and project manager. JTF intern Max Loubet filmed the J-town Culture Bearers performance series that was held during the Cherry Blossom Festival and Steve encouraged the board to watch his videos. JTF will go in front of the SF Rec & Park Capital Committee on June 5 and the Full Rec & Park Commission on June 20. Steve thanked everyone who submitted letters of support. Nikki Yoshikawa's last day at JTF was May 10 and JTF replacing Nikki's position with Elena Nielsen. Sandy mentioned that she sent the board the JTF strategic plan of operational programs for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Nikki Yoshikawa reported that Soko Hardware was approved for the Legacy Business Program on May 13, which makes that the 6<sup>th</sup> legacy business status in Japantown. Phil Ashizawa spoke in front of the Historic Preservation and Small Business Commission hearings. Yasukochi's Sweet Stop, Nichibei Foundation, and Kinmon Gakuen are in the queue. After that, Elena Nielsen will work on Café Mums, Drs. Wong, Totsubo, & Ng, and T. Okamoto and Co. The legacy businesses will receive a plaque or certificate. There are currently 3 grants available to legacy businesses: rent stabilization grant, business assistance grant, and accessible business entrance grant.

Nikki Yoshikawa gave an update on JCBD.

The key highlights are:

- Kyra Worthy from SFSafe was a guest at the May 8 JCBD meeting. SFSafe and SFPD are collaborating together to provide a free service talk about safety, using locks, homelessness, and meeting the local foot patrol for business owners and residents.
- As for surveillance camera updates, they are finished with Phase 3 adding 57 additional cameras around Japan Center East and West Malls, Kinokuniya, and Union Bank. There is a total of 104 cameras. They are considering a Phase 4, externally outside of the JCBD property line.
- In the marketing committee, the new street banners should go up in the next week or two. There will be about 50 banners going up.
- The revamped Japantown website has been pushed to the Fall, and Greg Vioria will be in charge of managing the website.

#### IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### A. Land Use/Transportation Committee

(Glynis Nakahara/Kenta Takamori)

###### 1. Update on the discussion at the Land Use/Transportation meeting of May 9, 2019

Kenta Takamori updated the board on the installation of a Lyft GoBike station in Japantown. There will be hearing on May 17 from the city to get feedback on the Buchanan Street at Sutter Street – Bike Share Station. Anyone who has an opinion for or against the bike share station can send an email to [Sustainable.Streets@SFMTA.com](mailto:Sustainable.Streets@SFMTA.com) with the subject line "Public Hearing." That is the best way to communicate your view to SFMTA. Kenta is willing to walk around Japantown and talk to people in the community on this issue. The committee will vote and make a recommendation to the board in June. The agreement with SFMTA to delay the process by a month is to have a letter explaining the board's discussion for or against the bike share station. The public hearing is May 17, 10am at city hall room 416. President Sandy Mori commented that the bike share program is an attempt by MTA to look at the environment and the impact of the environment to use less cars and more bikes.

###### 2. SB50

Glynis Nakahara reported Paolo Ikezoe from SF Planning attended the May 9 meeting and did a thorough analysis of SB50. SB50 is the bill that is designed to incentivize housing development. He gave the committee an overview of SB50 and left a digital copy of his presentation. The committee will discuss SB50 further at the next meeting. Most of Japantown is designated as a sensitive community meaning there is a 5-year deferment and SB50 legislation would impact Japantown if passed. The motivation behind that is that sensitive communities need time to come up with housing plans that meets the city's regulations.

Public Comments:

- As far as the questionnaires that were sent out, the commenter recalled that the Sutter and Buchanan site was added in later and thought there a newer version of the survey would be released. Were there any final results of the surveys?

##### B. Peace Plaza Committee

(Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

1. Richard Hashimoto could not attend the board meeting and Jon Osaki was sick so President Sandy Mori updated the board that she got an email from Michael Degregorio that the Peace Plaza received a categorical exemption from CEQA. The public hearing for the Peace Plaza design to be approved by the Capital committee of Rec & Park is June 5 2pm at city hall room 416. She encourages the board to attend and make comments supporting the design concept. The full Rec & Park Commission will have the hearing on June 20, 10am at city hall in room 416 to hear from the community for or against the design concept. Sandy recommends to the JTF Board to support the Peace Plaza design concept and transmit a letter of support to the Rec & Park Capital committee and the full Rec & Park Commission (Attachment C.) The Peace Plaza design community planning process is on the SF Rec & Park website. Many non-profits in Japantown are also submitting letters of support such as Kokoro, Nihonmachi Little Friends, JARF, Buchanan YMCA, and Kimochi Senior Center. Jon Osaki, Richard Hashimoto, Sandy Mori and Steve Nakajo are planning to meet with Phil Ginsburg to hear directly from him if and how much is the Peace Plaza going to be included in the 2020 Parks Bond. The Parks Bond is scheduled to be on the ballot in November 2020.

It was moved by David Takashima and seconded by Neal to support the Peace Plaza design concept and transmit a support letter to the Rec & Park Capital committee and the full Rec & Park Commission.

The vote passed unanimously. No public comments.

#### C. Cultural Heritage Committee

(David Takashima/Coco Tando)

1. JTF awarded a \$230,000 grant for the Japantown Cultural District

David Takashima reported on the \$230,000 grant received for the Japantown Cultural District from the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD). David explained that the grant is restrictive on how it'll be used. Much of the grant will be used to establish the ground work of the district, staffing up the committee, and communications. There will be \$20,000 set aside to launch community meetings. There will be annual RFPs to provide additional money not only for staffing but also to try and figure out what programs JTF should have. Coco Tando commented that some of the funding will go towards creating the CHHESS report which includes housing aspects. Sandy explained that as being a distinguished cultural district, each cultural district has to put together their own CHHESS report and each cultural district will have different strategies. JTF will need to create a new CHHESS using parts of the JCHESS and incorporate housing components.

#### V. UPDATE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. President Sandy Mori reported that JTF was approached to support and testify at a public hearing in naming a street in honor of late Public Defender Jeff Adachi. Because there was no time to come to the board, Sandy discussed this issue with the Executive Committee, and all 4 members of the Executive Committee supported the idea of naming a street in honor of Jeff Adachi. Sandy went to testify at a hearing sponsored by Matt Haney. At the hearing, there were 5 against the issue and 20 for the issue. At the May 14 hearing, it was supported by all 11 supervisors. The next step is that there will be a community meeting in the neighborhood where the street name will be changed. That meeting will be held on May 20. After that, the Department of Public Works will send out a survey to those who live in and businesses in that area. There needs to be more than 50% vote of either yes or no for the street name to change. The street name proposed to be changed is Gilbert Street which is behind the Public Defender's office.

It was moved by David Takashima and seconded by Rosalyn Tonai to support to the Board of Supervisors resolution in naming a street in honor of Public Defender Jeff Adachi (Attachment D.)

The vote passed with twelve in favor and one abstention. No public comments.

Sandy mentioned that she will be out in the month of June due to knee surgery.

#### **VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

1. It was moved by David Takashima and seconded by Glynis Nakahara to approve the resolution to accept the \$25,000 SF 2020 Census Community Outreach and Education Grant (Attachment E.)

The vote passed unanimously. No public comments.

#### **VIII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Sandy Mori introduced Elena Nielsen, who is observing the board meeting.

#### **IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The following announcements were shared:

Jacquelyn Chew announced that the Nishikawa Ryu CA group will be having a performance on June 9. Both of her senseis are coming from Japan to dance. The event will be held at the Buddhist Church of SF – 1881 Pine St. 2pm doors open and 2:30pm program begins. The tickets are \$20.

Jeremy Chan announced that Ito Yosakoi has been moved from Nagata Dance Studio to JCCCNC. There will be a free dance workshop Friday May 31 7-8:30pm at JCCCNC 1840 Sutter St.

#### **X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Sandy Mori at 7:33pm.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup> 2019 6-8pm at Union Bank Community Room.