



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING & PRESERVATION OF JAPANTOWN

JAPANTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8TH, 2017
UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM
(ADJACENT TO UNION BANK)
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94115

Attended: Alice Kawahatsu, Kimi Fukuyama, Merry Nishimura, Penny Lam, Vas Kiniris

- I. Greetings & Intros - Business Roundtable
- II. Visitor Center Update
- III. New Business

Action Items

1. Greetings & Intros - Business Roundtable

Ichibankan - Penny (Store manager)

Penny announced that the Post street entrance to Ichibankan will re-open prior to the Cherry Blossom events. They are planning on changing the layout of the store. The customers will be directed to walk in front of the register when entering the store. In this way, the employees will be able to see who is coming in and who is leaving more clearly. The store plans to open the Post entrance at the end of March

JEDM requested that Penny take pictures (before and after) of the layout. Specifically, the the area where the door will be reopened. Notes of customers feedback and any security notes related to this reopening of this entrance should also be recorded and reviewed.

It was shared that the MAC store located on Fillmore had merchandise stolen a few months ago.

Ichiban Kan will add more cameras in their store. In addition, K-pop beauty is looking to hire part-time workers. The job will include training. They are looking for someone who has makeup and retail experience. Someone who can speak Chinese would also be helpful.

Vas Kiniris (Executive Director of Fillmore Merchants Association)

On April 29th, there will be Yelp sponsored wine event with the Fillmore merchants. There will be 50 stores participating. 3,000 people are expected to attend.. Free wine will

be served and a walking map will be given out. Upper and lower Fillmore communities will be collaborating on this event. This includes Jackson Street all the way to Eddy Street.

The Council District Merchants Association Gala will be held at the Olympic Club on April 20th. It will be their 50th Anniversary and the theme will be "Summer of Love". This will be in partnership with the City Legacy group. They will be honoring legacy businesses. Vas left info handouts of the event with JEDM.

May 15-20th is small business appreciation week. There will be a side walk sale.

Boba Guys store has opened and is doing well.

2. Cherry Blossom Festival Update:

It was announced that Greg Villoria (former JTF staffer) will be in charge of planning Sakura 360 at the Cherry Blossom Festival for 2 weeks. Sakura 360 is an extension of the Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival catering toward the younger crowd. This is the 2nd year Sakura 360 will be in operation. The original location was located on Post Street between Laguna and Buchanan Street. This year, Sakura 360 will be located on Buchanan Street (Between Sutter and Bush Street) JTF Visitors Info tent will be participating in the Sakura 360 location April 8 and 9th only. They have been assigned a space close to the side of Super Mira store. Charges for non profit organizations/businesses is 450.00 for one weekend.

Merry mentioned that there will be a meeting tomorrow night for the Cherry Blossom Committee.

Cherry Blossom Gala - April 14th (Friday) 6:00pm (Alice)

It was announced that the Early Bird tickets are on sale for Cherry Blossom gala until March 30. Tickets are 150.00 per person. After March 30th, tickets will be sold for 175.00. The event will be held at the Westin St. Francis near Union Square. As this is the special 50th anniversary, approx. 200 people are expected to come to this festival from Japan.

Cherry Blossom Festival update (read by Kimi)

The Cherry blossom festival is coming along as expected. Our committees are hard at work preparing the final details of each area. The Grand Marshal will be Konishiki (former Sumotori and currently a famous singer). Konishiki will be leading the parade and gala. Our gala has extended the early bird pricing for guests. The committee is finalizing details on our new events (film festival, nighttime event "Cherry Blossom under the stars" and the Scavenger Hunt) They are encouraging participation and support from the Japantown merchants and festival participants.

Alice will be working to schedule volunteer help to handle the Visitor Info booth at the Cherry Blossom Festival. We are seeking Japantown merchants who will be offering special promotions during the Cherry Blossom Festival.

3. Visitor Center Update

The Visitor's Information Kiosk is in the construction phase. Money has been approved by the committee and we are drawing up a contract for the contractor. Alice shared the drawings of the Kiosk. The kiosk will be able to hold an ipad securely for a visitor's survey and a projector which will project visuals of events happening in Japantown.

Kimi is working on the operational plan regarding staffing for the Visitor's Center. Currently, JTF is seeking a partime volunteer coordinator and volunteers to work the Visitor Center at NJAHS. The job is open to college age through senior. The coordinator should have basic technology skills. Coordinator will be hired through NJAHS. Please see Ros Tonai, Executive Director of NJAHS for more information.

4. New Business:

The Peace Plaza Remediation Project is underway and an AD Hoc Committee is being formed. The Peace Plaza has experienced leakage and concrete breakage for many years. A report has been completed and is available at JTF. The AD Hoc committee will be working with Rec and Park, DPW, MTA and public officials.

Alice clarified as mission of JEDM. Supporting the business and listening to what can be improved in communication with merchants in Japantown.

Upcoming Events:

Cherry Blossom Festival- April 8th-9th, 15-16 2017 (Peace Plaza and surrounding Jtown)
Kodo mono Hi / Children's Day Festival May 5, 2017 (Peace Plaza)