

**JTF Board Meeting
February 23, 2004 @ 6:00 p.m.
1765 Sutter St.
Minutes**

A. New JUCEE Intern: Akane Sakurai

Linda introduced new JUCEE intern Akane Sakurai, who will be working with the Task Force.

B. Recognition of Quorum:

C. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of January 26, 2004

D. Chair's Report:

I. Board Vacancies

Jeff reports that Sheila Chung is looking to resign due to current responsibilities. On the issue vacancies and extended six months of the executive committee, Jeff would like to add Tak Matsuba to the board nomination committee which currently includes Jeff, Seiko, and David. Responsibilities will include nominating new officers. Jeff, as a WACAC member, states that his position as JTF chair will compromise his ability to advocate on behalf of the TF to the SFRA. However, he can remain as a board member, simply not as an officer. Mary Rogers is the current chair of the WACAC and items affecting the area will go through the CAC before going to the SFRA commission.

The nominations committee will try to meet within the next month. Tak, however may be relocating out of Japantown as he's opening up an office in Gilroy.

E. Recognition of Quorum

F. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of January 26, 2004

Minutes for the meeting of January 26, 2004 unanimously approved without changes.

G. Director's Report:

I. Signage Update

Street signs are supposed to be complete. Linda was going to take Akane to make sure the signs are correct.

2. SB307 Update

Jose Campos at the SFRA is working on the SB307 application. Shirley reports that they are using the JPPDTF study area boundaries for the application. However, the boundaries in the historic context statement do not match. Since the JTF and LPAB

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have adopted the historic context, it was stated that these boundaries should be used. The SFRA staff has been given the state contact for SB307 who has been assigned to San Francisco and San Jose.

3. Central Freeway

Last week, the JTF staff went to the mta commission and provided testimony to support the rebuilding of the offramp. The TF has also collected signatures on a petition with the help of Tak and Akira. Attempts to stop reconstruction are not in compliance with propositions E and I. The Fell St. offramp was the main exit to reach Japantown. Resident associations, Tak, and other community members came to the hearing. At this point, it is not certain whether the issue is dead. There was discussion about the viability of the offramp materials. The commission has decided to study the viability of the materials, all the while, the offramp will be rebuilt. Supervisors Gonzalez, Daly, and Dufty supported halting the reconstruction.

Another issue that arose that the Central Freeway CAC lacked a slot for a representative of the Western Addition or Japantown. The SFCTA contacted Shirley, who shared with them her mailing list for the area.

4. Kokoro update @ WACAC

Kokoro was requesting \$1.5 million additional dollars for capital. The Task Force supported Kokoro at the hearing. Kokoro also added that their facility is available for community use. Linda reports that there has been some questions regarding the contractor, Seniority Inc., and their commitment to the community. The SFRA staff recommended accepting the request, which the CAC did.

5. MUNI Signage

Linda reports that Michael Burns of MUNI, replied to the TF request for Japantown signage on buses. In his correspondence, Michale stated that Japantown is not a point of interest, but MUNI will see what they can do to help. If the JTF wants to designate points of interests in the community, then MUNI can put that on their map and website. Their destination signs however, will not be displaying "via Japantown" since it is not a destination. Linda added that they may possibly be able highlight certain lines and add "to Japantown" on their maps and websites. MUNI is also willing to adopt JTF language that all neighborhood based outreach will be culturally and linguistically specific. Ros adds that a former board member, Lisa Watada, is a PR consultant to MUNI and may be contacted if the TF needs support on this issue.

H. Committee Reports:

I. Business and Economic Development Committee

Tak reports that the JTMA will be selling their Koban to Chinatown for \$2,500. NPC has requested some of the funds, but the JTMA turned them down. The JTMA still has to notify Command Security. Shirley reports that she met with NPC and Paul regarding

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the installation of the monument. Tak, Rich, and Ed Lee will discuss the timing and the removal of the koban.

Linda reports that the committee also met with Ken Rich and John Billovits of Planning, and Kate White of the SF Housing Action Coalition. Linda wants them to focus on moving retail out to the side facing Geary and funding opportunities for that.

Jeff adds that the JTF is following up with the funding request to the SFRA and has yet to hear a response.

2. Health and Safety Committee

Linda states that she met with the Security Cooperative to deal with security issues. Command Security has brought up the problem of the SFPD's slow response time to their requests. It was requested that Command Security provide information on high crime areas, and peak criminal activity hours. The New Fillmore paper also reported that there was a riot involving 75-100 individuals on new year's day late at night. After the last murder in the NPC lot, the SFPD has increased their presence in the area late at night. Shirley suggests that H&S members attend northern station monthly meetings so the SFPD can hear their concerns. Fillmore merchants, after experiencing incidents, began to meet with northern station and worked together to address the problem.

3. Cultural and Historical Preservation Committee

Ros states that the committee needs more information on the SB307 proposal. Concerns also arose around the appointment that Rod and Pam are not Task Force board members, which does not fit with the language of the SB307 resolution. The committee also needed clarification on the role and responsibilities of the SB307 committee. The committee would also like to see youth, young people, and Japanese speaking members of the community on the committee. However, the restrictions of the resolution make it difficult to recruit such individuals. It was also brought up that an "other" category be added so that CBO staff members, in particular, may be eligible to sit on the committee. Shirley adds that the resolution does state that the committee needs to be 50% Task Force board members. This means that Rod and Pam may need to join the board if they are to become eligible according to the resolution. The committee has made a matrix of potential nominees, which they will share with the board and other committees. Questions arose as to what Gerald Takano's specific role is in the planning process since it was unclear who he was accountable to and what services he is providing, if any.

4. Communications & Marketing Committee

David reports that the C&M committee is setting up communications with the JTMA, Kinokuniya, JCGC, and Kintetsu to create and distribute brochures to promote Japantown. The committee will also be sure that the SFCVB has an adequate supply, and will be following up with the hotel associations and concierge associations. David reports that 100,000 copies can be made at .12 cents each.

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I. Other Business and Announcements:

Jeff adds that the mayor is holding a JA community meeting this week at City Hall in room 278.

Akira Minamiura reports that he will be leaving in mid-April as he's been assigned to another position in Japan. Tetsuya Yoshida will be filling his post. As a last request, Akira asked that the Task Force address an issue with the Japanese Foreign Ministry. The ministry's website says that in San Francisco there is gang fighting, and that the "south part of Japantown" is unsafe. This information is disseminated to travel guide books, and other sources which is very bad for business in Japantown. Having seen Midori's study on crime statistics showing relatively low crime in the area, Akira felt that perhaps statistics such as these can help to address the issue. Akira suggests contacting the Consul General as a starting point. The TF should also try and identify the source of their information. Akane adds that she read in her travel book that Japantown is not a safe area. Shirley suggests also consulting with the San Francisco travel bureau, as well as the Chamber of Commerce.

Ros adds that NJAHS will be holding their annual fundraiser on March 20th honoring Kevin Star, API members of the California legislature, and Angel Island Immigration Preservation Foundation.

J. Next Meeting:

Executive: Monday, March 15 @ 6:30
Communications: Thursday, March 18 @ noon
Preservation: Friday, March 19 @ noon
Board: Monday, March 22 @ 6:00
Business and Economic Development: TBA
Health and Safety: TBA