

japantown task force, inc.

a planning, preservation, and development organization

JTF Board Meeting January 22, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m. Union Bank of California Hospitality Room Meeting minutes

Attendees: Doug Dawkins, Stephen Engblom, Seiko Fujimoto, Caryl Ito, Sandy Mori (Pres.), Rosalyn Tonai
Staff: Darryl Abantao, Bob Hamaguchi
Guests: Douglas Digison, Will Judy, Walter Kaye, Karl Matsushita, Ken McCracken, David Miller, Selly, Ngakiwan, Fumio Suda
Excused: Tak Matsuba, Mark Moriguchi, Benh Nakajo
Absent: Denis Henmi

**Recognition of Quorum established by 6 members.
Meeting called to order: 6:15 p.m. by Sandy Mori, President**

A. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of November 27, 2006

B. 99 Cents Store Presentation – Douglas Digison, Will Judy, & Ken McCracken

The 99 Cents Store is planning on occupying the former Bell Market located on Sutter between Franklin and Gough. Everything in the store will be 99 cents with some products specially packaged at 99 cents. Currently, the company has stores in four states: Arizona, California, Nevada and Texas with a majority of their retail locations in the Southern California area. This will be the first location in San Francisco with corporate offices in the back of the store.

The retail location is approximately 32,000 square feet and will staff 45 to 50 members, 7 days a week from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Items to be sold include fresh produce, packaged foods, household products, clothing on occasion and opportunity buys of closeout items. The opening date is unsure and is in negotiations of lease under the formula retail process in the A-2 area.

Seiko Fujimoto commented that due to the nature of the area, a lot of the potential customers would be local residents that are the elderly population. They like that location because it is convenient, however the residents do not like to support stores with bad customer service. Sandy Mori also commented that they might take into consideration joining the Japantown Merchants Association and getting involved or supporting the community. At the time, they were unable to answer how the company handles community donations. Stephen Engblom commented that it would be essential to have visual access into the store from the sidewalk when looking into the tall windows. He also commented that there is a need for adequate lighting outside the store during the night.

JTF does not take a position on whether to support the 99 Cents Store to enter at the former Bell Market location on Sutter Street between Franklin and Gough Streets.

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C. Report from Bob Hamaguchi, Executive Director

Initiative Status Report– The initiative status report is the same handout that was distributed at the Board Retreat and there are no new updates.

Funding Sources - 12/31/06 – This was not included at the Board Retreat. The numbers from the Board Retreat did not go up through 12/31/06

Financial Statement - 12/31/06 – We are awaiting a reimbursement check from the MTA for approximately \$700.

Garage Budget Change Request Status – There are no new updates with the garage budget. If the Japan Center Garage does manage the Fillmore Garage, the structure of operations will be patterned after the JCG.

Better Neighborhood Planning Center Status– Renovations and improvements are currently being done on the Better Neighborhood Center Room. 3D Investments is providing a space for JTF to use to exhibit the progress of the planning sessions. Bob is working with Benh Nakajo and Robert Sasaki and hopefully will be open in the next 30 days.

Community Bulletin Board Status/Budget– At the Board Retreat a new concept was introduced that would be used for the Community Bulletin Board (CBB), but feedback showed minor adjustments needed to be made. Two new concepts were opened up to board members and considering everyone's feedback, Bob decided which we would use. The CBB is ready to be prepared for installation upon the decision of the logo. We aim for the CBB to be installed in the next 30 days. A press release will be released approximately one week prior to final installation to notify the community.

California Community Economic Development Assn. Class– Bob and Sandy attended the first workshop presented by the California Community Economic Development Association in a series of four workshops. The first workshop looked at identifying the needs and future development in the community. Statistics need to be developed and pictures need to be taken to map out the community DNA. This is good timing because Bob and Sandy can apply what they are working on in the workshop with the Better Neighborhood Plan.

D. Report from the Executive Committee – Sandy Mori

Mayor's Trip to Osaka – Emily Murase, Bob Hamaguchi, Seiko Fujimoto, Steve Nakajo, Paul Osaki, Diane Matsuda, Hatsuho Aizawa, Allen Okamoto, Rumi Okabe, S

San Francisco's Japantown Foundation – K

E. Other Business and Announcements

1. Press Clippings
2. Approval of David Ishida as a member of the Advisory Committee
Doug Dawkins moved and Caryl Ito seconded a motion to approve David Ishida as a member of the Advisory Committee.
3. Senior Citizen Problem with the 4-Sutter MUNI bus line

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Karl Matsushita, Japanese American National Library commented to the JTF Board of his concern for the elderly bus riders on the 2 Clement, 3 Jackson and 4 Sutter MUNI bus lines. Since the elimination of the 4 Sutter bus line during the midday, it has caused the 2 Clement to be overcrowded. There are too many seniors that are forced to stand which Karl feels is an accident waiting to happen. The issue is caused because there are more senior bus riders than there are seats reserved for senior/handicapped riders. On the weekend the average wait time is 15 minutes for the 2 Clement and the 3 Jackson, however on the weekdays the wait is 20 minutes. There are many senior housing and assisted living facilities in the area and MUNI is not providing enough service during the times it is needed.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:57 pm