

# japantown task force, inc.

a planning, preservation, and development organization

**JTF Board Meeting  
May 21, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Union Bank of California Hospitality Room  
Meeting minutes**

**Attendees:** Doug Dawkins, Seiko Fujimoto, Caryl Ito, Tak Matsuba, Sandy Mori (Pres.), Mark Moriguchi, Rosalyn Tonai  
**Staff:** Darryl Abantao, Bob Hamaguchi  
**Guests:** Dr. Goodman, Tonia Macneil, Jim Misener, Mikio Okada, Kenji Taguma  
**Excused:** Stephen Engblom, Michael Gowe, Denis Henmi  
**Absent:** Benh Nakajo

**Recognition of Quorum established by 7 members.  
Meeting called to order: 6:18 p.m. by Sandy Mori, President**

- A. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of March 26, 2007**
- B. Zabe Bent, SFCTA – Geary Corridor BRT Update**  
(Postponed to a future meeting)
- C. Jeff Mori, Chairman of the Board, Kokoro – Kokoro Assisted Living Update**  
(postponed to a future meeting)
- D. Report from Bob Hamaguchi, Executive Director**

**Funding Sources - 04/30/07 & Financial Statement 04/30/07** – The financial statement found in the meeting packets have been reduced to the immediate available sources. This budget was submitted when applying for a grant to the Gerbode Foundation.

**Better Neighborhood Plan Status** - A small ad-hoc group has met to get feedback on how to organize the process with the city. In the meeting packet, there is a table of comments consisting of public comments summary from the March 28, 2007 meeting with more than 200 attendees. In addition, there is a timeline for the process of the BNP provided by the Planning Department.

**Community Benefit District Status** – With the Better Neighborhood Plan (BNP) in its beginning stages, the Japantown Community Benefit District Committee decided to postpone the formation of forming a Community Benefit District (CBD) for a year to wait for the results of the BNP. During this time, the Japantown CBD Committee will continue to develop a plan and budget and assessments within the defined boundary. Outreach will continue to strengthen the connection between churches, non-profits, large and small property owners and their tenants.

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## E. Report from the Executive Committee – Sandy Mori

**Gerbode Foundation** - A request to the Gerbode Foundation for \$25,000 grant to fund general operations. The Gerbode Foundation approved our grant which included the revised financial statement with our projected budget and where funding was needed.

**Certificate of Preference** – Caryl Ito moved and Seiko Fujimoto seconded a motion for the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency to make a list of those individuals and families who are eligible for a certificate of preference to be made public. There has been concern from JTF that because the amount of time that has passed since the displacement of those in Japantown due to redevelopment, that the policy be extended to grandchildren as well.

**SPUR Tour – May 29, 2007** – Robert Hamaguchi, Richard Hashimoto, Sandy Mori, Steve Nakajo, and Paul Osaki led a group of individuals from SPUR on a tour of Japantown to help identify issues in the community and explain how SPUR can get involved in the Japanese community.

## F. Other Business and Announcements

1. Press Clippings
2. Dr. Goodman – 2211 Bush Street – (Nichi Bei Times Building)  
Dr. Goodman is in the process of buying the Nichi Bei Times building, 2211 Bush Street and is moving his ophthalmologist office space to the top floor. The project will include consolidating the Nichi Bei Times to one floor and the ground floor used for retail/ quasi-retail occupants, adding additional parking from 8 to 15 spaces and improving the appearance of the building.
3. Tonia MacNeil – San Francisco Arts Commission - Hamilton Recreation Center  
Tonia MacNeil, San Francisco Arts Commission presented a few designs that were created by Horace Washington for the exterior of the Hamilton Recreation Center. Mr. Washington's goal for the design was to reflect artwork and style from the different cultures of the community. After reviewing the designs, JTF advised that Ms. Macneil have Mr. Washington to meet with Tony Naganuma, Naganuma Design & Direction to modify his artwork to reflect more of the Japanese culture.
4. James Misener – UC Berkeley – Transportation Safety Research Program Leader  
James Misener reviewed the report on the Geary Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project and was concerned that they provided a distracting image of what a BRT is. Misener included a handout from the Federal Transit Administration as to what they define a Bus Rapid Transit System to be. In the Geary BRT report, there are no references to documents similar to the one provided by Misener. Misener would like to see the Geary BRT Study broadened to include an engineering study to explore different alternatives other than the alternatives provided.

While the study addresses BRT station and pedestrian safety concerns expressed by Japantown stakeholders, it had yet to include the feedback provided to the SFCTA by the Japantown BRT Committee on Japantown as a trip

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generation/destination, nor special use of the Japantown garage as an intermodal transfer point from passenger to transit vehicle travel. Specifically, Japantown stakeholders requested that special mention and provision of expansion to the Japantown garage be considered as part of the station design and operation. Caryl Ito moved and Seiko Fujimoto seconded a motion that JTF cannot support the report as written and recommends that the staff revise the report to include these concerns of the Japantown BRT Committee.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.