

# japantown task force, inc.

a planning, preservation, and development organization

## **JTF Board Meeting June 25, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m. Union Bank of California Hospitality Room Meeting minutes**

**Attendees:** Stepehen Engblom, Seiko Fujimoto, Denis Henmi, Caryl Ito (Vice Pres.), Tak Matsuba, Mark Moriguchi, Rosalyn Tonai  
**Staff:** Darryl Abantao, Bob Hamaguchi  
**Guests:** Gaynell Armstrong, Daryl Higashi, David Ishida, Ben & Mary Ishisaki, Walter Kaye, Candiece Lindstrom, Silmi Maherah, Pat Morigan, Jaime Rossi, Ted Weber  
**Excused:** Doug Dawkins, Michael Gowe, Benh Nakajo, Sandy Mori

**Recognition of Quorum established by 7 members.**

**Meeting called to order: 6:08 p.m. by Caryl Ito, Vice President**

### **A. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of May 21, 2007**

Rosalyn Tonai moved and Tak Matsuba seconded a motion to adopt the minutes for the JTF Board Meeting on May 21, 2007.

### **B. 1333 Gough Street High Rise Condominium Presentation (Linda Corso)**

Craig Hartman, Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, architects for ADCO made a presentation on the 400 foot / 38-story proposed project at 1333 Gough Street. The project will include a retail space, improved parking, swimming pool and education center. The building was designed to be a 400 foot tall building because since it is slimmer, it would reduce the shadowing effect, wind disturbance and would not create an urban wall.

Rosalyn Tonai asked for details on the proposed education center. The developer would like to find a non-profit to operate center including youth and senior programs.

There was also concern about the length of construction. The timeline for the project is to be approved by 2008 with construction to start soon after. Caryl Ito asked what stage of the project they were currently in. They are in the stage of conducting studies with the EIR approximately 4 to 6 weeks in the future. Ito also voiced that there would be a great impact on the community and these issues need to be addressed. The developer commented that in addition to housing as an interest to the community, that there would be improved landscape and park along Post Street.

Daryl Higashi asked how many units the project would include and how many at affordable prices. The project is looking to provide affordable rate housing at an offsite location. There will be 300 units total including 60 units offsite at affordable mixed rate. Of the market rate units, 50% would be studios and one-bedroom condos and 50% would be 2+ bedroom condos. The ratio of parking is to be determined, but today they are required to have a ratio of one parking space per unit. Higashi asked for elaboration on the offsite housing. The developer responded that it will be determined prior to final approval, but is required to be within one

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mile of the project. Higashi also commented that anytime you ask for a zoning change, it has a significant impact and sets a precedent for other developers. Ken Rich, SF Planning Department commented that a change in law/zoning would be required. Currently the height limit is 240 feet and this project would require a variance for 400 feet.

Caryl Ito asked what the reaction of this project was by the residents of the Sequoias. The developer responded that they attempted to setup a meeting with the Sequoias Assisted Living facility, but have not heard a response yet. Ito asked how many other community outreach meetings they have conducted and where. The developer said they have presented at Saint Mary's Cathedral, Carlisle residents, Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Association, and the JTF Board meeting. A guest who is a resident at the Sequoias commented that he feels it is safe to say that the reaction from the Sequoias is great concern.

Mark Moriguchi questioned how the height of this project compared to sea level and the Bank of America (BoFA) building. If you were to compare the height of the building at the proposed location and the BoFA building at its location, the 1333 project would be approximately 160 feet lower than the BoFA building. Information of the building at sea level was not available.

Stephen Engblom commented that he was pleased with the improvement of the current condition of the streetscape along Post Street, but wanted more information on the possible design of a shorter building. The developer claimed that they had studied the idea of a shorter building, but they determined it was not feasible because the design would create a wall effect and produce more shadowing. It was their determination that a taller, slimmer tower would not produce an urban wall and would not result in as much shadowing or wind disturbance or a sail effect minimizing wind level at the less street level wind disturbance.

Ken Rich commented that we are going to start on a major community process, which will be done around the middle of 2008. Rich said he spoke with Supervisor Mirkarimi and his internal folks and they have figured a way to get both processes going in parallel so that when there is a decision going on the Japantown process to get it as close to the 1333 Gough Street Project. The two processes are independent, but the decision will occur at the same time so that when the Board [of Supervisors] and the Planning Commission, they will have full information on what the Japantown Plan is so they will be looking at them on the same time.

**C. Kokoro Assisted Living Update (Jeff Mori, Chairman of the Board, Kokoro)**  
(Postponed to a future meeting)

**D. Report from Bob Hamaguchi, Executive Director**

**Funding Sources - 05/31/07 & Financial Statement 05/31/07** – Included in the Board packet and please view at your leisure.

**Japan Center Garage Funding Approval** – The Japan Center Garage budget was approved that included \$100,000 for JTF to continue operations. A special thanks to

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Seiko Fujimoto, Caryl Ito, Mary Ishisaki and Jeff Mori who testified at the hearing in support of JTF and that this is not a good time to cut funds from JTF with all of the projects underway affecting Japantown.

**Better Neighborhood Plan Status** – Included in the board packets is a copy of the RFP for the Public Relations Outreach Consultant. The deadline to apply is July 2, 2007. JTF will help with coordinate community meetings and workshops, steering committee meetings and focus groups. The role of JTF would to ensure that the right people are actively involved and to publicize the events through newsletters, website and press releases. The Public Relations Outreach Consultant would be paid \$28,500 by SF Planning Department in addition to a \$10,000 grant from the Mayor's office. These grants would fund the Executive Director, Community Aide and a third staff member to work with the BNP Steering Committee and Planning Department.

**Community Bulletin Board – Press Release** – Darryl Abantao has released a press release on the community bulletin board in the Nichi Bei Times and the Hokubei Mainichi newspapers. The Community Bulletin Board has been full with announcements of events and hopes that the press releases will help to keep the bulletin boards full in the future.

**Certificate of Preference** – Hamaguchi attended a workshop at the RDA Commission Meeting on June 5 by Olson Lee. He asked what is the status of releasing the names of those entitled to Certificates of Preference. There is a proposal to make five changes to the program (see attachment). Hamaguchi gave public comment that 1.) names of certificate holders be made public and 2.) grandchildren of original certificate holders should be eligible.

Gaynell Armstrong commented that they could not distribute certain information, due to privacy rights of those individuals. Tonai commented that names of those individuals entitled to a certificate of preference need to be published without addresses so they can be informed. Armstrong followed up that there are records, but does not include all children displaced. The Redevelopment Agency is now considering extending certificates to those future children who were displaced.

## **E. President of the Board Report from Sandy Mori Board Committees** – (postponed to future meeting)

## **F. Other Business and Announcements**

1. Press Clippings
2. Gaynell Armstrong – Joane Sakai Leaving San Francisco Redevelopment Agency  
Gaynell Armstrong announced that Joane Sakai will be leaving the SF Redevelopment Agency sometime in July and will work for the City's Attorney's office assigned to the Port of San Francisco.
3. Rosalyn Tonai – JPop Center Historical Survey of Past Tenants of 1746 Building  
Rosalyn asked if JTF would assist in the community outreach to reveal the history of the building. Before demolition of the building, NJAHS would like to

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engage the community to veil the building before demolition. NJAHS has done most of the research and would like JTF to help present this research.

4. Caryl Ito – International Women’s Museum Advertising at Best Buy  
Caryl Ito mentioned that Best Buy has sponsored the Women’s Museum to advertise in their Best Buy retail locations. The sponsorship includes screen time on the television sets for sale inside of the retail locations. Ito mentioned that JTF might look into seeking similar companies for sponsorship.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.