

# japantown task force, inc.

a planning, preservation, and development organization

## **JTF Board Meeting October 22, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m. Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan Planning Room Meeting minutes**

**Attendees:** Seiko Fujimoto, Tak Matsuba, Sandy Mori (President), Mark Moriguchi, Benh Nakajo, Rosalyn Tonai  
**Staff:** Darryl Abantao, Bob Hamaguchi  
**Guests:** Walter Kaye, Don Langley  
**Excused:** Stephen Engblom, Caryl Ito  
**Absent:** Doug Dawkins, Denis Henmi

**Recognition of Quorum established by 6 members.  
Meeting called to order: 6:08 p.m. by Sandy Mori, President**

### **A. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of July 23, 2007**

Rosalyn Tonai moved and Tak Matsuba seconded a motion to adopt the minutes for the JTF Board Meeting on August 27, 2007.

### **B. Kokoro Update (Jeff Mori, Board Chairman)**

Jeff Mori, Kokoro Board Chairman was pleased to report that last year's financial problems got resolved with the SF Redevelopment Agency buying back the land. This restructure ensures that the facility could remain operated by Kokoro and allow them to earn more revenue to be reinvested in enhanced program development and building maintenance. Kokoro owns the building, but Redevelopment owns the land. Funds are also intended to make a donor wall for the original donor board that raised the initial \$2.75 million. Kokoro is currently operating at 90% occupancy and includes 75 to 85% Nisei or Japanese-speaking residents.

Bob Hamaguchi asked if Jeff could comment on the breakdown of their Board of Directors. Jeff responded that there is capacity is 17 members, but currently they have 13 with four openings. Members include; Jeff Mori (President), Doug Nomura (Vice President), Laura Takeuchi (Treasurer), Rev. Richard Grange (Secretary), Bill Baird, Judy Eng, Stephanie Fujii, Guy Hoshiana (HUD specialist), Vickie Ina, Vicky Mizono, Charles Morimoto, Bob Obana (VA Hospital), and Sharon Yow.

### **C. Report from Bob Hamaguchi, Executive Director**

**Funding Sources - 09/30/07 & Financial Statement 09/30/07** – On October 4, Sandy Mori, Steve Nakajo, Rich Hillis (Mayor's Office), and staff from Supervisor Mirkarimi's office met with Sonali Bose, Department of Parking & Traffic. Our original budget was submitted including a partial breakdown of projects and budget allocations. Bob worked on a detailed budget of time and how projects including the Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan (BNP), Community Benefit District (CBD) and other various projects would not contribute to short-term revenue, but ultimately increase long-term revenue for the Japan Center Garage.

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There was one amendment to the budget that was submitted because the CBD could possibly be considered a political campaign/initiative. If we do proceed with the CBD, Rich Hillis, Mayor's Office offered to support the void.

Various short-term projects planned for the year includes community beautification, capital improvements, increased banner advertising, business retention efforts, Japantown promotions and a media plan. We have applied for a PG&E Grant for \$10,000 and are still waiting to hear if we have been selected.

Bose also showed interest in using Japan Center Garage for various pilot programs by integrating FastTrack technology with the Garage and variable pricing based on the number of occupants in each car.

**Staffing/Funding Projection Changes** – Darryl has become a full-time staff member and we will no longer be hiring a second community aide.

**Better Neighborhood Plan Status** – The Japantown BNP Steering Committee have selected Tony Kim and Kelly Pepper, Town Consulting. This consultant is being funded by a \$25,000 grant from the Mayor's Office of Economic Development that was originated by Supervisor Mirkarimi. We will administer the monthly payments, but Town Consulting will be working with the steering committee. In order to get the full \$25,000 we need to fund the \$2,500 that goes to JCYC for administrative fees.

Rosalyn Tonai moved and Mark Moriguchi seconded a motion to fund the JCYC administrative fee using funds from the Gerbode Foundation to support the Jtown BNP Steering Committee.

Bob and Rosie Dudley, SF Planning Department gave a brief update of the BNP Plan. We were pleased with the turnout for the Town Hall Meeting on October 18. We estimated 160 to 200 attendees and most people stayed for the three-hour process. Sandy thanked Rosie and commented how diverse the audience was. Bob announced that there would be a repeat session and review of the same materials on October 29 from 3 to 5 p.m. We are hoping that more merchants would attend this meeting due to the time and being able to step away from their businesses during those hours.

Rosie commented that we have a few upcoming meetings including the October 29 repeat town hall community meeting and a Pine United Methodist Church focus group on October 23 and a Korean Focus Group on October 27.

## **Japan Center Garage Marketing Plan –**

**Grocer Outlet** – Sandy reported the status of the 99-cent Grocer Outlets moving into the former Bell Market retail location on Post and Gough is unknown. There might be issues with the building and the plans having to be redrawn. Don Langley commented that he contacted Redevelopment Agency and they had not heard that the 99-cent store was no longer interested.

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## D. President of the Board Report from Sandy Mori

**1481 Post Street** - At our October 18 Town Hall Meeting, it was announced that this project must be part of the Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan. Rosie Dudley commented that we have gotten the green light to integrate it with our Plan. Sandy commented that JTF needs to lobby the various Planning Commissioners since the current height of this project will need a zoning variance with approval of the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The Sequoias hired BMWL group to lobby against the proposed 1481 Post St. project and JTF decided to stay out of supporting after asking to join.

Tak Matsuba moved and Seiko Fujimoto seconded a motion for the Japantown Task Force not to be part of neighborhood coalition opposing the 1481 Post St. project due to the conflict of interest with the Better Neighborhood Plan and JTF should not be viewed as the representative organization for the entire Japantown community.

**WACAC Appointment** – Currently, Sandy is the only representative from Japantown on the Western Addition Community Advisory Committee. Currently, there is no Japanese-speaking member on the committee. Mark Moriguchi moved and Benh Nakajo seconded a motion to support the recommendation to the Mayor's office of Seiko Fujimoto.

## E. Other Business and Announcements

1. Press Clippings
2. Silver SPUR Luncheon Nov. 5 – Honoring Jon Osaki
3. BNP Community Meeting #3 – Saturday, December 1
4. Luncheon for Jikei Kai on November 11 at Hotel Kabuki – Honoring Past Ministers
5. Hotel Kabuki Grand Opening on November 15 from 6 to 9 p.m.
6. Kimochi Silver Bells on December 9
7. Sundance Theater Opening December 14

Meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.