

japantown task force, inc.

a planning, preservation, and development organization

JTF Board Meeting April 28, 2008 @ 6:00 p.m. Japantown Better Neighborhood Plan Planning Room Meeting minutes

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

**Recognition of Quorum established by 7 members.
Meeting called to order: 6:13 p.m. by Sandy Mori, President**

A. Approval of Minutes: Meeting of March 24, 2008

Rosalyn Tonai moved and Stephen Engblom seconded a motion to adopt the minutes for the JTF Board Meeting on March 24, 2008.

B. Special Appreciation to Sequoia's Graffiti Cleanup Team (Bette Landis & Team)

JTF invited the Sequoia's to the meeting to recognize their diligent work every weekend to remove graffiti from the community. The community takes for granted their continued efforts and hard work every Saturday. Only when you see the graffiti do you notice that it is an ongoing problem, but when the community is free from stickers, graffiti on public and private properties no one notices how much time and energy was spent to keep a clean community.

The Sequoia's graffiti team includes: Bernie Britton, Carmen Carana, Barbara Daily, Bette Landis, Michiko Mango, Kiyoko Matsuda, Kathy Reyes, and Sam. Due to health issues, Marie Cleasby, the past leader of the group and Dorothy Seliger, who coordinates with DPW to keep the supplies in stock were unable to attend. Bette Landis wanted to recognize Michiko Mango for her dedicated efforts for the past 8 years. Michiko will do whatever it takes to remove every sticker no matter how difficult it is to remove. She will use every tool she can from Ease Away, water, razors, and Goo Gone.

Bob Hamaguchi also commended the Sequoia's group for their hard work and dedication. At the March Community Cleanup Day, many Sequoia graffiti team members joined us early in the morning to pull weeds and remove graffiti. A picture of the news article included Bob and Bette removing graffiti along Geary Boulevard.

The JTF Capital Improvement budget includes \$1,000 for graffiti supplies and cleanUp. Darryl will work with Bette Landis to purchase supplies and tools.

C. Report from Bob Hamaguchi, Executive Director

Financials/Funding Sources—

Planning Department – First Amendment – The Planning Department has funded us in two parts totaling \$38,500 and will fund up to the maximum of an additional \$4,250. Last month's update of the BNP was that the plan had been extended the end of the project to September 2008 and we will be requesting additional funding for the extension of the project.

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Gerbode Foundation – Bob Hamaguchi, Sandy Mori and Lisa Watada met with Tom Layton, Wallace Gerbode Foundation to update him on the status of JTF. We submitted a three-year proposal for \$25,000 each year. Tom Layton would like to meet with this group again to discuss future JTF projects. This past year was the first partnership with the Japantown Merchants Association and JTF. \$5,000 from this past year's Gerbode funding was used to fund the new banners around the community.

PG&E – We have applied for a \$8,000 grant from PG&E.

MOWED, MOCD, RDA – Meetings with these city agencies have been scheduled and we will present our projected funding needs and projects for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

Caryl Ito commented that we are requesting many agencies or foundations to fund the next three years. Ito asked if doing a direct solicitation of people involved in JTF would be a good fundraiser.

Rosalyn Tonai asked if JTF has ever applied to the Japantown Foundation. Hamaguchi responded that JTF does not want to compete with other Jtown organizations for the same money.

Better Neighborhood Plan Update – At last month's Board Meeting, it was discussed that information and updates be submitted to the press periodically to update the community on where we are in the plan and recent activity. Bob and Rosie Dudley, Planning Department released information about information on key elements and upcoming meetings where the Steering Committee would present a community plan. The schedule has not changed since the last Board Meeting.

Sandy Mori commented that this is where recommendations will begin to be discussed and made. She recommended that Board members with specific interest in any of the seven topic areas should contact Bob. Caryl Ito commented that people think that decisions have already been made but they are learning a process is going on. We keep publicizing and still there are people who do not know.

Community Cleanup Day Report (Darryl) – There was a great turnout for the March 29 Community Cleanup Day with over 46 volunteers from the community in addition to staff present from the Dept. of Public Works and the Graffiti Clean Team. Volunteers arrived at 9 a.m. at the Peace Plaza where they were able to meet with other volunteers from the SF JACL, Boy Scout Troop 12, Buddhist Churches of America, Hotel Kabuki, Hotel Tomo, Japanese Community Youth Council, Nihonmachi Parking Corporation, the Sequoias and residents. Hotel Kabuki donated a delicious lunch inside the hotel and Nihonmachi Parking Corporation donated bottled water during the day.

Jim Misener Approved for BRT CAC – Jim Misener was approved to join the Geary BRT Citizens Advisory Committee. There were over 70 applicants with many being highly qualified for 11 spots. Misener has provided a lot of assistance with previous BRT issues and impacts regarding Japantown.

Summer Safety Community Meeting – There was a handout distributed for a Summer Safety Community Meeting that is being organized by Judy Hamaguchi. The tentative

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date is Friday, May 23 that will be a family event with dinner and education from SF SAFE, the SF Fire Department and other public organizations. Bob, Darryl, and Judy visited the Northern Station to discuss this meeting and they were very interested in participating. The focus is for children, youth, family and seniors to be aware of safety and security issues. The goal is for community members and tourists to be educated so they can help themselves and utilize public services.

Convention & Visitor Bureau/Merchants Meeting – May 6 at 3 p.m. – Bob Hamaguchi and Richard Hashimoto, Japantown Merchants Association have invited the SF Convention and Visitor Bureau to talk about their programs and offer advice and tips to better promote Japantown Merchants.

D. President of the Board Report from Sandy Mori

Garage Marketing Position –Bob Hamaguchi discussed the marketing and promotion of Japantown that JTF wanted the garage to fund so that Hamaguchi could be hired as a marketing director and not JTF being hired as the marketing director. He would serve the objectives of JTF and act as a volunteer Executive Director for JTF. Bob handed out a description that lists the job duties and JTF marketing objectives.

Sandy Mori commented that the marketing goal and mission of JTF is similar to that of the garage. Hamaguchi will be directly answerable to the Japan Center Garage Corporation Board of Directors, but the exact details of what this role would be have not yet been defined. Hamaguchi and Mori are presenting the idea of having Hamaguchi serve as JTF Executive Director and a marketing position with the garage. Bob and Darryl have funding through September to continue working on the Better Neighborhood Plan through September if the BNP stays on track.

Stephen Engblom commented that there will be a big negotiation process for MTA over the parking situation and any development on Japan Center. Engblom questioned if this could be a potential problem in the future. Hamaguchi responded that he does not see this as a problem because the merchants, garage, and community have commented on the closing of the garage.

Rosalyn Tonai commented that there could be a problem of perception if Bob works half for JTF and half for the garage. Sandy commented that as long as the JTF Board knows the details of the situation, it is the obligation of the Board to educate people about gossip. This is an alternative method to fund Hamaguchi and he will be doing the same work. If there is no funding mechanism to fund an Executive Director, we will be without his services. There would not be a change in budget, but rather a different way to fund the staff's salary. It was pointed out that the JCGC has been funding JTF for the past six years.

Stephen Engblom moved and Caryl Ito seconded a motion in the support of Bob Hamaguchi to be hired as a marketing director for the Japan Center Garage and volunteer as JTF Executive Director subject to details of the position and impacts to JTF.

A-2 Exit Plan Update

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E. Other Business and Announcements

1. Community Calendar
2. Press Clippings

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.