

# japantown task force, inc.

a planning, preservation, and development organization

JTF Board Meeting  
Tuesday August 30, 2011 @ 6:00 p.m.  
JAACL  
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Sandy Mori, Seiko Fujimoto, Denis Henmi, Caryl Ito, Mark Moriguchi, Ros Tonai,  
Lisa Watada  
Staff: Bob Hamaguchi and Greg Marutani  
Guests: None  
Absent: Doug Dawkins, Tak Matsuba

A. There was a quorum.

Meeting called to order: 6:15 p.m. by Sandy Mori, President

The minutes of Feb 24 and April 25, 2011 were approved as written.

B. Report from Bob Hamaguchi, Executive Director and Greg Marutani, Community Aide

Japantown Economic Development and Marketing Program (JEDM)

## KB Café - Discretionary Review – Bob Hamaguchi

JCCCNC filed DR with the Planning Department.

The reasons of filing DR for KB Cafe are:

1. Too many similar fast-food style restaurant
2. Formula retail
  - The application was originally submitted by Kobe Bento, subsidiary of Quickly, and the applicant crossed out the name and changed to KB Café.
  - 3D is saying KB Café is not formula retail because no more than 15% of Quickly products

The hearing is set for Thur Nov 10.

## Tree Removal – Greg Marutani

DPW put the notice of tree removal on 15 trees on Sutter Street between Webster and Buchanan. They will not remove the trees if the trees are healthy unless the property or homeowners request DPW to remove the trees. In addition, the one of the eucalyptus tree behind Kabuki Theater will be removed. Seiko mentioned that the Nihonmachi Terrace has requested tree removal or trimming trees to DPW because the trees are blocking the streetlights on Sutter Street from Octavia to Webster.

## Peace Plaza – Greg Marutani

In May, a letter regarding the issue at Pease Plaza was sent to Recreation and Parks because they removed all cigarette urns from the Pease Plaza due to smoking banned in public areas. The watering system is also broken and some plants are dying (under the Pagoda area). We are following up.

## Street Banners – Greg Marutani

Funded from MOED (\$11,000) and PG&E (\$4,000)

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Sub-Committee could not choose one design, so they decided to use two designs for each side. Seiji Horibuchi volunteered his designer in Japan. The banners will be put up after the Labor Day. MOED funds were provided to create and put up the 10 of Hatsune Miku (anime character) Banner for the J-Pop Festival.

## Culinary Tour of Japantown – Greg Marutani

Lisa Rogovin, private tour owner, has done tours at Ferry Building, Gourmet Ghetto in Berkeley, and Mission. She will take people to a food tour in Japantown (e.g. Benkyodo) On September 12, she will have a media tour in San Francisco Japantown to introduce the history of community, the mall, and neighborhood. She has worked closely with Alice Kawasaki because she knows Japantown and Japanese food.

Jack Hirose – Sandy Mori

## SF Japantown Foundation – Bob Hamaguchi

The Recreation and Park Commission of the Recreation and Park Department has approved the dedication of the tea house at the Japanese Tea Garden in the name of Jack Hirose who donated \$500,000 to renovate the Tea House and the Gift Shop. The ceremony and reception will be held on Thur October 20 4:30 to 7:00.

## BNP – Bob Hamaguchi

Community Land Trust (CLT)

Burlington Association conducted four meetings to conclude a mission statement and basic plan for the formation of a community land trust. The key issue is the CLT must qualify as 501(c)3 non-profit status. There are non-profit organizations started as housing developer and became commercial developer. The recommendation of Burlington and Roy Ikeda, one of CLT Committee members, is to get a lawyer to clarify whether the CLT can be a 501(c)3. Rosalyn Tonai mentioned the CLT has to have the charitable purposes and affordable housing development to be 501(c)3. If the CLT can be a 501(c)3, the next step will be identify which properties can be purchased under the CLT. The Committee is targeting a broad range of Japantown properties, not only the Japan Center. Roy Ikeda has recommended two lawyers to the committee.

## Recommended Changes to the Draft BNP – Bob Hamaguchi

The BNP Organizing Committee is in favor of keeping the existing scale and heights in the Japantown neighborhood. The two major issues are:

### 1. Social Heritage District

- Western SOMA created the first Social Heritage District which includes preservation of historical events and other cultural and historical elements.
- Not historical district, not about buildings.
- Japantown is currently using SUD to preserve cultural and historical buildings, but the SUD will be replaced by a Social Heritage District. It is likely that the SUD will be amended to include the key elements of a Social Heritage District.
- Sandy Mori recommended that Kinmon Gakuen and Buddhist Church should aware of the California Historic Building Code.

### 2. Height and Density

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- The recommendations mention no up-zoning in the Japantown Commercial area.
- Sandy Mori recommended that the plan include enough height and density to encourage new development.
- Bill Sugaya told Bob to ask the Planning Department to seek economic feasibility

## C. Other Business and Announcements

There was no new business or announcements.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.