



**NOTES FROM THE  
JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE  
CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETING**

1684 POST STREET  
TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2015

**BOARD MEMBER PRESENT:**

Rosalyn Tonai, Judy Hamaguchi, Glynis Nakahara.

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Bob Hamaguchi, Greg Marutani

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Patty Wada, Diane Matsuda, Karen Kai

The meeting began at 12:05 p.m.

**LANDMARKING THE PAGODA**

It was noted that Jonathan Lammers of the Planning Department shared the initial draft of the Landmark Designation Report regarding the Pagoda and Peace Plaza which was ready for public comment.

While there was consensus on the landmarking of the Pagoda there was much discussion on whether there was anything in the Peace Plaza worth landmarking since so much of the original design has been altered and very little historical integrity of the Plaza remained, after subsequent renovations over the past 50 years.

Diane Matsuda (HPC) commented that she would prepare an article for the Nichi Bei Weekly that would describe the procedures involved in landmarking the Pagoda and refer interested individuals to review the 61-page draft report that would be available on-line.

She said the article would probably be released some time in late April (after the Cherry Blossom Festival) and indicated there would be a minimum of 30 days to receive comments and/or concerns about the draft report.

Diane wants to ensure that there is a broad outreach to the community, especially to those who could provide historical documentation, photos, or oral testimony about the Pagoda and Peace Plaza that may be missing from the draft report.

Rosalyn commented that this time would allow members of the JTF subcommittee and others to add more comments to the document, particular to the past use of the Plaza as an open space for Japantown's public events and ceremonies.

It was the consensus of the committee to recommend that the JTF Board organize a community meeting on Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at the Community Room of Union Bank from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. to be another mechanism for receiving comments as well as material related to the Pagoda and Plaza.

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has initiated the possibility of landmarking the Pagoda and Peace Plaza, while the Planning Department has budgeted a staff person, Jonathan Lammers, who conducted the research and prepared the initial draft report

Concerns were raised again to emphasize that it is critical for communication among the various entities involved with the Pagoda, they include other city departments include the SF Metropolitan Transit Authority as the Japan Center Garage is directly beneath the Peace Plaza; the SF Recreation and Parks Department, which owns the Peace Plaza and responsible for the maintenance of the Peace Plaza; the SF Department of Public Works may also be involved in the restoration of either or both the Pagoda and Peace Plaza.

#### **RUTH ASAWA FOUNTAINS IN BUCHANAN MALL**

Funds to conduct an assessment of the needs to repair the Ruth Asawa Fountains in the Buchanan Mall have been appropriated to hire the contractor. At this time there is no projected date of completion of their report, which would include the estimates for the repairs.

#### **COMCAST AND BUCHANAN MALL**

There is no further update on the initial meeting of Comcast representatives with Jim Yonashiro of the Nihonmachi Parking Corporation (NPC).

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The next meeting will be at Noon, Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at the NJAHS,

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.