

JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE BOARD MEETING
June 21, 2017
UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM

ATTENDEES: Alice Kawahatsu, Paul Wermer, Judy Hamaguchi, Glynis Nakahara, Seiko Fujimoto,, Rosalyn Tonai, Clint Taura.

ABSENT: Anthony Brown, Beau Simon Jon Osaki, Richard Hashimoto, Benh Nakajo, David Ishida

STAFF: Greg Marutani

GUESTS: Michiko Yamada, Karen Kai, Robert Rusky, José Tengco

I. Call to Order

The meeting called to order at 6:10 p.m. by President Alice Kawahatsu

It was moved by Rosalyn Tonai and seconded by Clint Taura to accept the agenda as submitted with notation that someone would report on the items where the designated person on the agenda was absent from the meeting.

The motion passed by a unanimous vote

II. Approval of Minutes of the Board Meeting on May 17, 2017

It was moved by Paul Wermer and seconded by Clint to accept the minutes of the April 19, 2017 with the correction that the references to "May 16" should read "May 17," under "C" a comma should separate Micky Imura, George Yamasaki. Also under "C", add "Peace Plaza" ad hoc Committee.

The motion with recommended edits was passed by unanimous vote.

III. GUEST SPEAKER

No Guest Speaker

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Land Use Committee

Pau reported that the SF Metropolitan Agency (SFMTA) indicated they did not have a budget for streetscape of the Webster Street Bridge, however after reviewing this particular section of the Geary BRT, managed to set aside approximately \$40,000 to support the community in enhancing the area on Geary Boulevard to possibly direct traffic to Japantown.

As the timeline for the community to come up with any design recommendations, there will be another meeting with the Geary BRT staff on Tuesday, July 12th, the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Land Use Committee.

The representative from DPW offered to work with JTF in organizing work crews to assist with volunteers from the community to repaint the Webster Street Bridge, which would further demonstrate the community's commitment to improving Japantown.

It was suggested that color should be carefully considered to be coordinated with the larger design project.

B: Economic Development/Marketing (Alice Kawahatsu)

1. Visitor Center and Kiosk Update

Alice reported that the visitor kiosk made its debut at the Japan Day celebration on June 16th.

Rosalyn reported that the part-time position of volunteer coordinator for staffing the visitor kiosk is still open.

The Soy and Tofu Festival was again supported by the JTF with a shuttle bus that transported individuals from Japantown (Post and Buchanan Streets) to St. Mary's Cathedral where the event took place. Acknowledgment of volunteer Nathan Segal who assisted visitors letting them know about the shuttle.

C: Cultural Heritage (Rosalyn Tonai)

The first hearing of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) regarding landmarking the Peace Plaza and Pagoda took place on June 21st. After the public testimony, the HPC unanimously approved moving the issue forward for its second reading. It is anticipated that it would be at the August 2nd meeting of the HPC.

D. Finance Committee (Mark Moriguchi)

1. 2017-18 Budget Update

IN the absence of Mark, Greg reported that \$100,000 was earmarked in the Mayor's budget and an additional \$50,000 was submitted to Supervisor London Breed's office. City budget negotiations are continuing and await final word some time in after July 1st.

E. Peace Plaza/Pagoda Ad Hoc Committee (Jon Osaki/Richard Hashimoto)

In the absence of Jon and Richard, Greg reported that the Ad Hoc Committee had met with Supervisor London Breed who informed those present that she is committed to seeing the Peace Plaza and the Pagoda repaired as soon as possible. She added that she is meeting with SFMTA, Recreation and Parks, and Department of Public Works, as well as the Mayor to put together a plan to achieve her goal.

F. Executive Committee (Alice Kawahatsu)

1. Update on Nominations Committee

Judy reported that she has recruited Sandy Mori, Benh Nakajo, and Jon Osaki to serve on this committee. However, as it appears the JTF bylaws need to be amended to prescribe the election of Board members and staggered terms and to describe the selection/election of Officers before the work of her committee proceeds.

2. Part-time Community Aide Position

Greg reported that recruitment for a part-time Community Aide has begun, anticipating it would take some time to get the word out. However, filling the position would not take place until funding has been confirmed.

3. Office of the District Attorney Grant

Greg reported that the Office of the District Attorney awarded a \$3,000 grant to JTF to work with the Business Watch Group (BWG) and Japantown Merchants Association (JMA) in designing some poster/postcards that would remind visitors parking their vehicles in Japantown to minimize the temptation for someone to break into their vehicle.

G. CBD Steering Committee

(Greg Marutani)

Greg reported that ballots were sent out to the owners of the individual parcels on June 9th in the proposed CBD, along with a cover letter, executive summary of the benefits of a CBD and how the funds would be directed, the official Management Plan and Engineer's Report.

Ballots will be received up until 3:00 p.m. on July 25th at which time, because it is relatively small proposed CBD, the results would be made known in less than an hour. The result would be announced at the Board of Supervisors meeting shortly thereafter.

Letters were sent to the affected property owners announcing there would be two special meetings to learn more about what a CBD is about, what it would be able to do, and to respond to their questions. The first would be Tuesday, June 27th at Noon and the second on Wednesday, July 12th at 5:30 p.m. Both meetings would take place at the JACL HQ at 1765 Sutter Street.

V. NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

VI. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

VII. STAFF REPORTS

- A. Crime Report (Refer to Advanced Material)
- B. Japantown Observations (Refer to Advanced Material)
- C. President's Report (Refer to Advanced Material)

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalyn Tonai
Secretary