

Cultural Heritage & Sustainability Committee  
February 1, 2021 (on-line via Zoom)

Committee members present: Lucy Fisher (co-chair), David Takashima (co-chair), Jeremy Chan, Rosalyn Tonai, Lori Yamauchi

Board members present: Sandy Mori

Staff present: Steve Nakajo, Nina Bazan-Sakamoto

Guests present: Richard Hashimoto, Gary Barbaree, Karen Kai, Elena Nielson, Derek Tahara

- I. Call to order at 6:05pm
- II. Approval of January 4, 2021 minutes  
Moved by Lucy and seconded by Lori to approve minutes; approved unanimously.  
(Richard's discussion occurred here as he had to leave at 6:30)
- III. Staff report
  - Nina: the first monthly artist meetup included a diverse group of ~20 artists to discuss "functionalities" of a new Hub and a cultural district logo. A revised CHHESS report will be sent to MOHCD. Re-designed roles of new staff hires:
    1. a strategic projects coordinator, 2. Hub and website designer, 3. Small business coach under JCBD.Lori suggested considering other models, such as Little Tokyo's +Lab. Its framework can be used to evaluate art as a vehicle (e.g., the Co-creative Hub) for community development and cohesion.
  - Steve:
    1. Japan's Counsel General will host 3 focus groups of 10 younger ("next generation") AJAs in March and April. The topic is the Future of JTown; CG Maeda will open each session. Sandy Mori and Jaclyn Funasaki of CG will provide an overview. Jeremy requested invitees names; Steve will ask the CG to provide.
    2. New staff position will coordinate strategic partnerships to increase JTF/CD revenue. Will outsource website, marketing and platform work.
    3. Nina, Lori and Steve will meet with SF Planning Department on 2/4/21 on Cultural Heritage. A recording of the meeting will be available to David and Lucy for review.
    4. A "Housing Workshop" with the CD will be held in Spring to learn about housing, Community Investment Fund, Land Trust and Community Development Cooperation. Invitees include SF Planning Department, Little Tokyo Service Center, Chinatown Community Development Corporation, and East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation.
  - Ad hoc committee and CHSC: Lori reported that CHSC could help build Japanese culture into Malls and potential housing. Sandy: goal is to have the 3 JTF committees contribute to the Malls discussion, which is in initial stages.

IV. Unfinished Business - Discussion of committee's CHHESS priorities and initiatives

- (Strategy A, tactics 2 & 7) Status of Kinmon Gakuen and Nichi Bei Kai for preservation status and potential use for cultural events. Richard Hashimoto, Kinmon Board member, reported the school requires ~ \$10 million for ADA renovation. The school has San Francisco legacy business and historic preservation approval; now pursuing National Registry to qualify for federal monies. Rosalyn offered information and help on funding opportunities. Kinmon is renting space for community groups to use their building. Currently, Zoom classes are on Saturday only.

Discussion of Nichi Bei will be deferred.

- (Strategy C, tactic 6) Investigate feasibility of coordinating JA archives of multiple community organizations. The four JTown entities are National JA Library, NJAHS, Nichi Bei Kai, JACCNC (Oka's collection is being treated for mold). Goal is not to consolidate JTown's holdings but insure archives are preserved, readily searchable and accessible to the public.

Sandy: NJAHS is most viable of the four and can best lead this effort with its experience and knowledge of JA historical holdings.

Ros: the four libraries are currently "siloes" but NJAHS' board is considering succession planning and preservation (digitation started 10 years ago). JTF should provide leadership to coordinate long-term viability as her outreach for coordination was not accepted.

David: reported his experience was that information is scattered in multiple sites. Concerned about preserving for next generations and better access for information.

Sandy: does the committee want to bring these entities together for a discussion? Ros' efforts have been 1:1 and JTF doesn't have staff for this purpose.

Steve: issue is long-term but critical for planning so resources are organized and maintained. Spoke of possibilities for tours of historic places in JTown.

Gary (board member of NJA Library): JTF is best suited to start conversations but background information is needed first. Nichi Bei Kai building might be a gathering place since tea rooms are historic and mostly unused. He suggested first step toward forming a consortium is to answer three questions:

1. Are the four collections currently intact and under no jeopardy for immediate dissolution?
2. Who are institutional partners such as SF Public Library, USF, Smithsonian?
3. Who are historic partners, such as the Presidio Trust?

- Agenda item: Update current registry of traditional Japanese art and cultural organizations is deferred.

V. Announcements:

Rosalyn: The Day of Remembrance will be held virtually on 2/19. Theme is Abolition and Reparations; Rev. Arnold Thompson will be the keynote speaker.

VI. Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm. Next meeting is Monday, March 1, 2021.