

Japantown Task Force
Cultural Heritage & Sustainability Committee
Minutes
Monday, August 2, 2021
5:30pm – via Zoom

Board members present:

Lucy Fisher, David Takashima, Gary Barbaree, Jeremy Chan, Benh Nakajo, Rich Hashimoto, Daryl Higashi, Sandi Mori, Kenta Takamori, Lori Yamauchi

Staff:

Steve Nakajo, Susie Kagami, Brandon Quan

Guests:

Hiroshi Sengoku, Yasuaki Miura, Makiko Shimabe, Mutsuko Miura, Kiyoshi Naito, Takao Shimabe, Max Nihei, Emily Nichols, Karen Kai

Meeting called to order at 5:32pm. Quorum was present.

Agenda:

Moved to approve by Gary, seconded by David – approved unanimously

Minutes of July meeting:

Moved to approve by David, seconded by Gary – approved with the additional words under Unfinished Business:

“Gary reported he will be meeting individually with the executive committee of JARF. Letter [prepared and ready to send] to JARF members inquiring about any holdings of archival material.”

Staff report:

Steve: the time-line of the revised CHHESS document sent to this committee and board members includes a review by JTF committees and Board before submission and approval to the Board of Supervisors in October. Susie and Lori presented a powerpoint overview of the revised document to the committee.

New business:

Hiroshi Sengoku of Nichi Bei Kai introduced the president, Yasuaki Miura who introduced members of their board. Sengoku presented an overview of the organization, including historical and current photos of this organization founded in 1893. He highlighted cultural and educational programs and the historic Kanso-an tea room in their building.

See attached summary of Nichi Bei Kai. Steve and Benh commented on the social and cultural legacy of Nichi Bei Kai; Sandy remarked that the organization’s ownership of the building is a notable asset.

Unfinished business:

1. Gary reported he is meeting with the executive committee of JARF regarding any archival holdings. He announced that the remembrance ceremony for survivors of the atomic bomb explosions (Hibakusha) will stream on the Nichi Bei Foundation FB channel on August 9, 2021, 6pm. The ceremony, held concurrently in Japan, was sponsored by JARF and Friends of Hibakusha.
2. Kenta updated progress on the Japantenna Shop Project. The work group includes Kenta, Tatsuki Tomita, Emily Murase and Kaz Maniwa; Kenta, Emily and Kaz are affiliated with the US - Japan Council. Kenta asked for a letter from JTF to send to prefecture governors and/or key staff to introduce the project and invite participation. The Japan CG offered to endorse this with a cover letter. Kagoshima prefecture has been identified to initiate the project in November; however, prefecture confirmation, venue and opening date are still in flux. Kenta said he or another member of the Project's working group will be attending CHS committee meetings for the foreseeable future. As part of comments and questions, Kenta said he's been working with Higuchi of the CG's office; Jeremy said he doesn't think a letter will require Board approval. The meeting participants were unable to hear Daryl's questions so he will email them to Lucy and Kenta.

Public comments:

None offered

Announcements:

Benh announced the Nihonmachi Street Fair schedule. The first, one-day weekend activities were well-attended; the third will be this Saturday and Sunday (August 7-8).

David announced that that one fully-vaccinated person who was in the JACL building tested positive for COVID-19. In a follow-up, individuals who were in contact with this person tested negative.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03PM.

Next meeting will be Monday, September 6, 2021 at 5:30pm.