

**NOTES FROM THE
LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE
1765 SUTTER STREET
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2018**

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT:

Glynis Nakahara, Clint Taura, DDS, Judy Hamaguchi

OTHERS PRESENT:

Karen Kai, Steve Nakajo, Robert Rusky, Paul Wermer, Darcy Brown, Julia Brashares, Camille Hamilton Pating

STAFF PRESENT:

Greg Marutani

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/UPDATES:

A. SF Beautiful

Darcy Brown, Executive Director at SF Beautiful provided a brief history of the organization that began in 1947 whose purpose is to protect the character and enhance the livability of the City such as the preservation of the cable cars.

She updated the Committee on the Fillmore "Blue Bridge" showing a drawing of the proposed lighting and mural concept, but even with support from the Fillmore Merchants Association, formal approval to proceed with the plan is currently on hold.

Darcy indicated that she has reached out to numerous organizations in the neighborhood, including the Fillmore Merchants Association, that have endorsed the project.

Darcy added that she has secured \$100,000 for the proposed revisions to the mini-park on Fillmore and Turk which is proceeding forward.

B. Webster Bridge Community Clean Up

Julia Brashares from the Department of Public Works (DPW) explained that the DPW holds district clean ups every month except December and that District 5 is scheduled for Saturday, July 28, 2018.

With the repainting of the Webster Bridge over Geary Boulevard Julia indicated she would coordinate with Kevin Sporer also at DPW and that a walk-through of the site would be ideal so the DPW crew could possibly schedule some needed work prior to the date of the cleanup to expedite the work.

She emphasized that DPW staff will be responsible for prepping and doing pre-work prior to the clean up day, to facilitate the scope of work by volunteers. When the subject

of color for painting the bridge railing Julia stated that DPW has a very limited palette of paint and suggested that if there is a specific color desired it would be good to get that to the DPW as soon as possible.

In response to a question about the DPW doing power washing, Julia said they can do that as well.

C. Geary BRT Median Update:

Karen reported that some adjustments to the panel designs that added more clarity and significance to the three targeted neighborhoods (Japantown, St. Francis Square, and the Fillmore) were made and -- in order to meet the SF Municipal Transit Authority (SFMTA) schedule targets -- were submitted.

It should be noted that the original design deadline was in mid-October but for a variety of reasons, including delay in the Geary BRT schedule, resulted in a February submission.

D. Ford Go Bikes Update

Glynis reported she received an e-mail from Justin Nyugen with a link to data regarding the positive impact of bikeshare programs on businesses. He is continuing his research on the requested data. In addition, he reported that their goal is to go before the MTC hearing in the Spring and to install in the summer.

Glynis agreed to contact Jerry Ono at Union Bank and Emily Mitra at Dosa, which are two sites presently on the GoBike proposed station installations in Japantown, to remind them they should share any concerns about the possible installation of a biking station along their street front. She noted the other locations are in front on Hamilton Rec Center on the south side of Post and a change of the location at Bush and Octavia to the east side of the street.

E. NPC Lot Development Update

Glynis reported that there was no further update at this time, per Robert Sakai.

G. Peace Plaza/Pagoda Landmarking and Improvements Update

The next Ad Hoc Committee meeting is set for Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. at Union Bank Community Room.

H. Design Guidelines and City Action

Glynis reported that she met with Maia Small and Jeff Joslin of the Planning Department for an update on the City's Urban Design Guidelines which is up for final approval at the Planning Commission this month. As part of the proposed UDG framework, neighborhoods like Japantown are able to develop more specific Neighborhood Guidelines for approval, which will complement and override the UDG. The LU committee will be moving ahead with neighborhood guidelines for Japantown as it is one of the strategies identified in JCHESS.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Building

Camille Hamilton Pating of BCSF shared information about the pending vote by the National Council delegates of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), to authorize the sale of the BCA headquarters building at 1710 Octavia, which is owned by the BCA. She

gave an overview of the shared history of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco and the BCA building, noting that it served as the BCA headquarters for several decades until they decided to build a new headquarters in Berkeley, California. Due to financial challenges to pay off the mortgage and in order to address deferred maintenance needs for the new headquarters, there is a proposal to sell the property. BCSF was not consulted in the matter. They reached out to BCA with inquiries and learned of the very short timeline before the motion to authorize the sale of the property will be voted on Feb 24, 2018. She added that the issue of selling the parcel had come up nearly ten years ago but delegates voted at the time not to sell the property. BCA was to consider other possibilities of addressing the financial debt.

It was recommended that the LU Committee draft a letter to present to the JTF Board at their February 21, 2018 meeting urging a delay of the vote on sale of the property, which is calendared to take place on Saturday, February 24th in Sacramento.

B. Sutter/ Buchanan Bus Bench

Clint explained that the MUNI mini-stop recently installed on the north side of Sutter Street was a result of requests received by the SF Municipal Transit Authority (SFMTA) and support for the request by Supervisor London Breed.

Steve Nakajo arranged a meeting with Gail Stein (SFMTA), Mr. Miura, Mr. Yasukochi, and Dr. Taura to discuss possible alternatives for installing the mini-stop. Mr. Sam Mihara (property manager) indicated that he was willing to defer to the tenants regarding the issue. Though Clint was willing to pay for a bench and maintain it, the other tenants at the site did not support a bench, resulting in the installation of the mini-stop.

Now that the mini-stop has been installed there appears to be more support for an alternative -- possibly a bench or some form of seating -- and the removal of the mini-stop. Glynis offered to share possible seating options with Clint who would run them by the other tenants and property manager. Clint will continue to monitor the situation and update the LU committee.

C. Public Realm Improvements

Glynis urged committee members to start to think about potential public realm improvements, including repairs and potential improvements to the Peace Plaza, in terms of process, etc. for future discussion.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting ended at 8:10 p.m.