

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

**BOARD MEMBER PRESENT:**

Glynis Nakahara, Clint Taura, DDS, Judy Hamaguchi, Alice Kawahatsu

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Karen Kai, Steve Nakajo, Robert Rusky, Paul Wermer

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Greg Marutani

The meeting began at 6:10 p.m.

**I. INTRODUCTIONS**

**II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/UPDATES:**

**A. Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Building**

Glynis reported that the vote at the National Buddhist Council regarding approving the sale of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) building to address the loan debt for the new BCA headquarters in Berkeley was defeated.

A motion to form a special committee to look into a short-term and long-term solutions was passed with a deadline to present their recommendation(s) by the end of 2018 to the 2019 National Buddhist Council, which may include sale of the BCA building.

**B. Webster Bridge Community Clean Up**

Paul reported that Kaz Naganuma provided valuable recommendations on possible colors to consider painting the railing of the Webster Street Bridge. They are planning to obtain color chips and view them outside in natural daylight and will share their recommendations with the LUT Committee.

In a follow up conversation with Julia Brashares from the Department of Public Works (DPW) she reaffirmed that DPW would conduct preparatory work on the bridge for the painting, but would hold off until there is a firm commitment from JTF to engage volunteers for the scheduled District 5 clean up on Saturday, July 28, 2018. Paul will inquire about powerwashing the bridge/walkways.

Outreach to various groups and organizations will be needed such as St. Francis Square, YMCA-Buchanan Branch, NLF, Rosa Parks Elementary School, JCYC, among others, as well as publicizing the project in the Nichi Bei Weekly.

**C. Ford Go Bikes Update**

Glynis reported that both Union Bank and Dosa were sent information about the proposed installation of a bike station along their frontage and provided information as to where they should send their concerns and comments regarding such an installation.

Glynis presented Richard Hashimoto's notice that he read on "Next Door" about a bicycle valued at \$1,200 being stolen in Japantown as well as his concern that Ford GoBike might be considered a formula retail and be required to apply for a Conditional Use permit.

Paul stated that "formula retail" did not apply to Ford GoBike stations for formula retail is focused on chain stores. He also added that District 2 is firmly opposed to the number of proposed Ford GoBike station installations and any property owner who opposed to having one of the stations installed along their frontage would have the support of Supervisor Stefani.

#### **D. Joint Meeting with JTF and Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Association**

Glynis reported that the week of April 23, 2018 is an agreeable week for a joint meeting of JTF and Cathedral Hill Neighborhood Association (CHNA) with representatives from SF Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to present their final recommendations regarding the Geary BRT and possibly update when work on the project between Van Ness and Fillmore would occur and its projected construction period.

As there is potential for a sizeable turnout, the Issei Memorial Hall at JCCCNC or possibly space at St. Mary's Cathedral are being considered looking at Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> as preferred dates preferably at no or discounted rate for a nonprofit organization.

#### **E. Peace Plaza/Pagoda Landmarking and Improvements Update**

Glynis reported that she attended the February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Peace Plaza/Pagoda Ad hoc Committee where they reported they are continuing to outreach to the commissioners of the Recreation and Parks Department (RPD) and the SFMTA to inform and update them on the need for the repairs and renovation of the Peace Plaza.

They also met with RPD staff to discuss a set aside of \$100,000 for a community design process related to the Peace Plaza work. Glynis added that hopefully a portion of those funds would be available to conduct a robust process. She also noted that there are many specialists with expertise, both in community outreach and design, and that there are multiple paths JTF can consider.

Glynis reported that there was a discussion as to whether the design process would be with LUT or retained within the Ad hoc Committee and that this issue would be further discussed at the March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ad hoc Committee. She added that both she and Clint would not be able to attend that meeting and encouraged others from the LUT to attend if possible.

The next Ad hoc Committee meeting is set for Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. at Union Bank Community Room. Both Clint and Glynis will not be able to attend.

#### **F. Design Guidelines and City Action**

Glynis reported that Maia Small of the Planning Department contacted her regarding the City's Urban Design Guidelines which is up for final approval at the Planning Commission. Maia would appreciate support at the hearing. Glynis will be convening a work group to pick up the Japantown Design Guidelines. She asked all interested individuals to email her.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Renaming a Portion of Buchanan Street**

Upon learning that the LUT Committee work on the Buchanan Median crossing had no relationship to renaming a street and/or portion of a street, Steve Nakajo withdrew his proposal to rename either side of the planned Buchanan crosswalk Yori Wada Way and Leroy King to recognize their contributions to the neighborhood

#### **B. Japantown Cultural Heritage District Boundaries**

Glynis reported that Supervisor Hillary Ronen's resolution regarding establishing cultural heritage districts in the city references Japantown's JCHESS as a blueprint for other community groups considering forming a cultural district. However, the legislative language that identifies the boundaries of the CHD is not aligned with the boundaries of JCHESS.

She also mentioned that the State of California is also looking into preservation of cultural districts.

Both of the above-mentioned items will be discussed and followed by the Cultural Heritage Committee of the JTF who will keep the LUT Committee apprised of any relevant issues. Glynis encouraged individuals to attend the CH meeting March 13 at noon to discuss.

### **IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Paul and Karen attended the Land Use Committee meeting of the Board of Supervisors regarding Senate Bill 827, a proposal by Scott Wiener which would allow properties near transportation corridors to permit high density construction for housing. Currently there are no exemptions for areas such as Japantown that, through a neighborhood planning process like JCHESS, have restricted height limits unless approved by the community.

They urged a letter from JTF be sent to Supervisors Aaron Peskin, Hillary Ronen, Norman Yee and Sandra Fewer expressing JTF's concerns and that they be included in their resolution opposing SB 827.

Due to the fact that this item was brought to the attention of the LUT committee through an e-mail sent the morning prior, the LUT committee will look into permitting action on this item though not formally placed on the agenda.

The meeting ended at 7:35 p.m.