

**NOTES FROM THE
LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE**
1765 SUTTER STREET
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT:

Glynis Nakahara, Alice KAwahatsu

OTHERS PRESENT:

Rodney Chin, Hiroshi Fukuda, Richard Hashimoto, Tomo Hirai, Steve Nakajo, Robert Sakai, Linda Walsh

STAFF PRESENT:

Greg Marutani

The meeting began at 6:05 p.m.

I. INTRODUCTIONS:

Glynis announced that Paul Wermer resigned as chair of the Land Use/Transportation Committee as of August 16, 2017 and that she had been appointed as the chair by Alice Kawahatsu, President of the Japantown Task Force (JTF).

II. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Geary BRT Median Update: Status and Planning for Community Meeting

Glynis reported that Karen Kai continues to work on this particular item; work continues on arranging at least one community meeting when the preliminary design is available to share at the meeting. It appears that the deadline for submission of design requests would be some time in December, which would allow JTF to organize a community meeting, perhaps in early October.

B. Ford GoBike Update

Glynis reported that she received an e-mail from Justin Hu-Nguyen from Ford GoBike in response to the two questions posed at the previous LU/T meeting. He confirmed that the engineers could not provide shorter length stations. With regard to any data that would support a case that having a station in Japantown would bring tourists to the neighborhood, he said that on a monthly average 45% of the users were "local" and 55% were "visitors" but did not have any data that was focused on having a station increased visitors and/or business in a neighborhood.

It was requested that another follow up communication be sent to SFMTA to find out how much time the community would have to comment and what that process would look like (Outreach measures, meetings hosted by Motivate, etc) on a proposed Ford GoBike station being installed in Japantown.

C. Webster Street Bridge Community Clean Up and Painting w/Dept. of Public Works

There was concern about whether a major community-volunteer framework for minor maintenance and painting of the bridge made sense. The relative difficulty of prepping and painting, need for skilled workers, potential dangers and liabilities, and other practical considerations were pointed out. Glynis will reach out to Public Works contacts

to confirm parameters, timeline and next steps, including the feasibility of determining specific paint colors for the bridge vis-à-vis Public Works.

Glynis stated she would ask Karen to reach out to Kaz Naganuma, about recommending a couple of colors, recognizing red is used for special significance in Japan and may not be appropriate for the bridge.

D. NPC Development Update

On behalf of the Nihonmachi Parking Corporation (NPC) Robert Sakai reported that NPC was currently in negotiations with one developer who is seeking an exclusive arrangement; he added that once agreement is signed the developer would have 180 days to prepare a formal proposal.

E. 1481 Post Street Project Update

Glynis reported that she spoke with Marlayne Morgan who said they have requested a meeting with the developer about the “new” design of the building. She will contact JTF when a date and time are set.

F. Peace Plaza/Pagoda Landmarking and Improvements Update

Glynis reported that at the Cultural Heritage Committee meeting that it was reported that the Open Space/Park Renovation Citizens Advisory Committee of Recreation and Parks Department had designated the Peace Plaza as protected open space in perpetuity and would not necessarily require landmarking the Peace Plaza to prevent possible development of the site. She will provide update on the research that will be done to obtain a copy of the document and/or ordinance adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Café Matcha Maiko

Glynis reported that a “change of use” permit notice was received at JTF as the proposed new tenant plans to install a kitchen in the former video store location on the first floor of the Kinokuniya Building.

She had researched the company and found there were currently three locations in Hawaii. She also noted the company offers franchising opportunities, but at this time does not reach the threshold for “formula retail” in San Francisco.

It was determined that no further action was needed at this time regarding the “change of use” permit.

B. Construction at Bertie Minor Lane

Glynis reported that JTF received information regarding the construction of an enclosure for trash bins in St. Francis Square that is being proposed to be constructed in the area behind the YMCA – Buchanan Branch.

Linda Walsh from St. Francis Square shared the drawings for the construction. Rodney Chin from the YMCA Buchanan Branch did not have any issue with the proposed work.

It was determined that no action was needed on this matter as all parties involved were in support of the project.

Glynis reported that Paul Wermer suggested adding “Public Realm” with the Japantown CBD (when it is formed) to coordinate such matters that impact both organizations.

Glynis added this item to the “parking lot” for now.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.