



# JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE

日本町の経済発展・計画・保存

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING & PRESERVATION OF JAPANTOWN

## Notes From the Land Use/Transportation Committee Meeting of the Japantown Task Force

Union Bank Community Room

Thursday, May 9, 2019

### Board Member Present:

Glynis Nakahara, Kenta Takamori, Sandy Mori, Alice Kawahatsu

### Staff Present:

N/A

### Others Present:

Sheffield Hale, Nan Park, Linda Walsh

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. There was no quorum.

### Unfinished Business:

#### Small Business Streamlining Legislation Overview

Benjamin Van Houten, Business Development Manager, Nightlife & Entertainment Sector gave an overview of the pending legislation to accommodate flexible retail to address increase in vacancies. It will allow combining two uses, arts, limited restaurants, general retail and services, personal services, retail professional services, and trade shop. Also art activities in certain NCDs.

He is not seeking any particular action from JTF at this point. Committee members were generally supportive of the proposal.

#### SB 50

Paolo Ikezoe, Senior Planner, Citywide Division of the SF Planning Department provided an overview of the department's analysis of impacts to San Francisco and answered questions. The handout is attached.

Further study and discussion by the committee will take place in future meetings.

### Announcements:

#### Bike Share

Kenta reported that he and Glynis were informed yesterday of SFMTA's proceeding with a hearing to put a docking station at the Buchanan/Sutter site.

Committee members present discussed the proposal. The Committee is still seeking a response from Lyft and/or the SFMTA regarding various questions that were previously asked (economic impact, possible non-street locations, etc). The Committee is divided in its support for the installation of a GoBike docking station in Japantown, and presently unable to make a recommendation to the JTF Board.

Although questions posed by the community survey focused on identifying proposed locations for a docking station in Japantown -- there is still significant opposition to supporting the installation of any docking station at all. The primary points raised in opposition are:

1. loss of parking spaces
2. aesthetic impact (the color of the bikes and the docking stations)
3. safety concerns (primarily for the many elderly pedestrians in the community)
4. skepticism about the potential for positive economic impact (tourism and shopping)
5. the already-visible presence of non-docked bikes and scooters

The location which had at one point seemed the most promising, the location on Buchanan St at Sutter St (alongside Buchanan Hotel), has come under scrutiny for its potential negative impact on Nihonmachi Little Friends (after school program) and the small businesses in the immediate area. At this point there does not seem to be an obvious location in Japantown with wide support, and it needs to be recognized that the discussion is still at the level of whether or not Japantown welcomes a docking station at all.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

The next meeting will be at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, June 13, 2019 at Union Bank.