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MEMORANDUM

TO: SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: PAUL A. LORD, JR., SENIOR PLANNER

THROUGH: JOHN RAHAIM, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

SUBJECT: INFORMATION PRESENTATION ON THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO AND REVISIONING OF THE **JAPANTOWN BNP** (2009)

DATE: OCTOBER 20, 2011 **(FOR INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION AND HEARING ON OCTOBER 27, 2011)**

INTRODUCTION

Since the August 2009 Japantown BNP presentation to the Planning Commission, significant and important progress has been made in the review and development of proposed amendments to the original DRAFT Japantown BNP (2009). The community representatives participating in this review process are committed to a comprehensive review and generating public support for their recommended revisions to the original neighborhood plan. This review is furthermore predicated on a representative, open community comment on any proposed revision. The complexity of DRAFT BNP recommendations, however, warrants significant and time consuming efforts by volunteer community representatives and Planning Department staff, as well as ongoing funding support. At this time, the community, through formal votes and authorizations from the Japantown Organizing Committee, is prepared to share their initial review and recommendations with the Planning Commission and the general public.

GENERAL UPDATES

- ✓ Planning Department commits to staff support for the DRAFT BNP review and update process (August 2010).

- ✓ "Add Back" funding from the Board of Supervisors was secured for FY 2010-2011 and FY 2011-2012 to support the community review and proposed re-visioning of the original Plan as a more specific community revitalization strategy.

- ✓ Additional funding for enhanced community outreach and education was secured from the Friends of City Planning.

- ✓ The Ford Foundation provided direct funding and consulting services to support specific community land trust research questions.

- ✓ Student interns have been engaged to carry out specific research and merchant survey projects.

- ✓ A City Family Working Group has been convened by the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services to periodically meet with representatives from the Japantown Organizing Committee and their consultants to review analysis and recommendations.

- ✓ The Japantown BNP Organizing Committee was been constituted to include working committee co-chairs, membership from the original BNP Organizing Committee and members of the general public. This new formulation of the Organizing Committee is now functioning as a voting body to publicly review and deliberate the review process recommendations. The Organizing Committee is currently meeting monthly.

- ✓ An extensive public outreach process has been conducted from June through September of this year (2011) under the direction of the Japantown Organizing Committee to augment and validate working suggestions for modifying the original draft plan (2009).

- ✓ Four working review Committees are meeting publicly up to twice each month to formulate recommendations for Organizing Committee consideration. These four review Committees are organized to discuss specific chapters of the original draft plan (2009).

The Committees

- ✓ **Cultural Heritage**
  Paul Osaki and Ken Kaji, *Co-Chairs*
- ✓ **Community and Economic Development / Japan Center**
  Bob Hamaguchi and Hiroshi Fukuda, *Co-Chairs*
- ✓ **Land Use / Built Form**
  Karen Kai and Glynis Nakahara, *Co-Chairs*
- ✓ **Transportation / Public Realm**
  Diane Onizuka and Greg Johnson, *Co-Chairs*

JAPANTOWN PLANNING OVERVIEW - POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE

Critical Elements in a Dynamic Neighborhood Planning Strategy

The Japantown Organizing Committee is operating within the context of hopeful, positive parameters for physical and social change. In order to achieve the optimal flexibility and adaption to planned (and unseen) dynamics of constraints and opportunities they continue to utilize the following guide-posts:

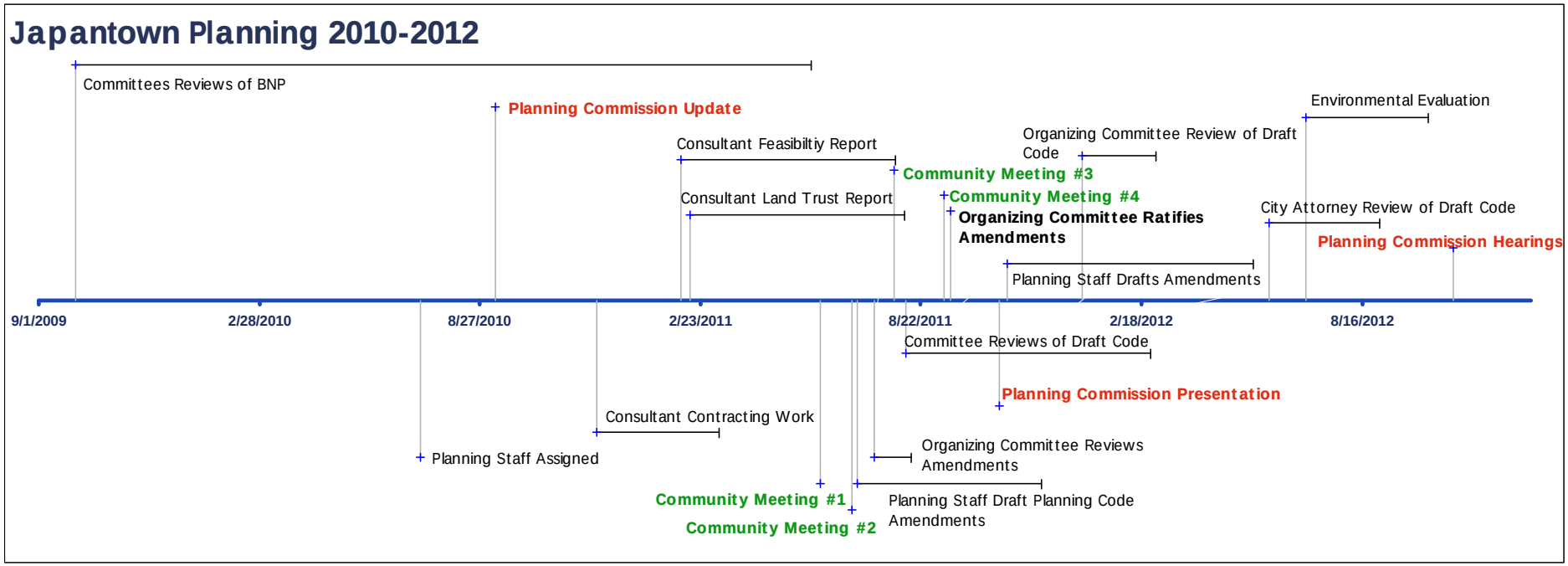
- The creation of a **Social Heritage District (SHD)** that will protect the past, present and future social legacies in the community. These legacies are tangible and intangible, existing and former places, uses and institutions that need to be identified, memorialized and protected for community vitality and posterity.
- Under the SHD, a database identifying the **legacies to be protected** can be up-dated for purposes of analysis and maintaining an inventory of social heritage resources. Important landmark structures can be a part of this inventory.
- **Design Standards,** once prepared, and in conjunction with potential legislation for a new **Japantown Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD)** will help guide future public realm improvements and private development in the neighborhood**.** The Design Standards and newly developed NCD zoning requirements can be established for properties within the SHD.
- **Policies** for SHD compliance and compatibility, regarding development standards, once established can be administered and enforced by the appropriate City agencies.
- Continued exploration of **enhancing local ownership** and control of strategic properties identified as historic, existing and future contributors to the SHD.

SUMMARY OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS

- ✓ Process and Accomplishments
  - Funding
    - $30K - Ford Foundation – Burlington
    - $50K – SF Board of Supervisors' Add Back Funding – Seifel
    - $6K – Friends of City Planning – Community Outreach and Participation
    - $25K - SF Board of Supervisors' Add Back Funding – FY11-12
  - Organizing Committee and Sub-Committees (Public)
    - Open to the Public
    - Votes on Recommendations
    - Regular monthly Committee meetings
  - Community Meetings (formally noticed with mailings to property owners, use of neighborhood newspapers and public posters throughout Japantown) involved more than 200 members of the greater Japantown community.
    - 6/1, 6/27, 7/31 (Facilitated Information Gathering)
    - 9/10 (Sharing Recommendations with the Community)
  - Community Land Trust Studies (**attached**)
    - Burlington – Governance
    - Seifel – Economic Opportunities
- ✓ Develop and Confirm Organizing Committee Recommendations and Next Steps
  - Summary or Matrix Formation of changes needed in the 2009 BNP
  - Ongoing Work Efforts
    - Social Heritage District
    - Japantown Design Standards – Public Realm and Private Development
    - Community Land Trust and other tools for enhancing local ownership
    - Redo of NC-2 and NC-3 into a Japantown NCD
    - Rooftop Sustainability Opportunities
    - FY11-12 Add Back Funding - Seifel
      - CLT Legal
      - Social Heritage District Proposal
      - Coordination with SFMTA Funding for Structural Analysis of Existing Japan Center Garage

ATTACHMENTS

- Japantown Planning Project Timeline 2010-2012
- BNP Change Recommendations
- Burlington Associates – *Commercial Stewardship in Japantown, Assessing the Feasibility in Japantown,* (2011)
- Seifel Consulting– *Economic Analysis of Acquisition of the Japan Center by a Community Land Trust,* (2011)
- Visitor Surveys (2010-2011)


Japantown Planning 2010-2012
Committees Reviews of BNP
Planning Commission Update
Environmental Evaluation
Consultant Feasibiltiy Report
Organizing Committee Review of Draft Code
Community Meeting #3
Consultant Land Trust Report
Community Meeting #4
Organizing Committee Ratifies Amendments
City Attorney Review of Draft Code
Planning Commission Hearings
Planning Staff Drafts Amendments
9/1/2009
2/28/2010
8/27/2010
2/23/2011
8/22/2011
2/18/2012
8/16/2012
Committee Reviews of Draft Code
Planning Commission Presentation
Consultant Contracting Work
Organizing Committee Reviews Amendments
Planning Staff Assigned
Community Meeting #1
Planning Staff Draft Planning Code Amendments
Community Meeting #2