

THE FIERY DRAGON

April 2011

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President's Lunar New Year Message

Kung Hay Fat Choy and Good Health to You and Your Family! The Year of the Rabbit is certainly becoming a very interesting election year. With rank choice voting, who will be the #1, 2 and 3 endorsements for the Club and will voters apply their ranking to maximize their candidate's chances of success? Will a number 2 slot be better to win at the end? That all depends on the number of candidates running and the voter turnout.

Recent census data confirm what CADC has known for the past decade, Asian and Latino American populations represent more than half of the San Francisco population but unfortunately, the turnout at the polls for the two groups is low. But with an interim Chinese Mayor Ed Lee running the City now, all the candidates are working to win the Chinese votes. All the insiders and campaign strategists acknowledge that the Chinese votes will be the major swing vote in November.

Voters should look beyond the social meet and greet photo ops with each candidate and evaluate all of them based on each candidate's:

- Historic commitment to the community;
- Fiscal reform plan on solving the deepening City deficit
- Commitment to job creation for local residents; and
- Making MUNI work without bankrupting the City

Keep an eye on the following key dates before Election Day on November 8:

- 8/12/11 - Last day for candidates to file or withdraw nominations papers
- 9/12/11 to 10/25/11 - Write-In candidates can file for nominations papers
- 10/10/11 - First day for early voting
- 10/24/11 - Voter registration deadline for the Nov. 8 election

So beginning on April 10, we have 6 months before the first ballot can be cast! Wow, we have a lot of work to do so please stay in touch with CADC!



Sam Kwong
2011 President of CADC

SILVER DRAGON MEMBERS:

Eddie Chin
Ed Fang
Bayard Fong
Richard Ow
Amy Qu
Peter Reitz
Sandy Su

GOLDEN DRAGON MEMBERS:

Stanley Chan
Ben Tom

“All the insiders and campaign strategists acknowledge that the Chinese votes will be the major swing vote in November.” (Sam Kwong)

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JUNE BALLOT: EARLY ED LEE TEST FOR MAYOR



by Samson Wong

Columnist Samson Wong's columns have appeared in more than 400,000 households weekly through the Examiner, Independent and AsianWeek newspapers. Wong is a former president of the Chinese American Democratic Club. He formerly chaired the non-partisan Chinese American Voters Education Committee, S.F. Citizens Advisory Committee on Elections and served on the S.F. Elections Task Force member, which brought back S.F. district elections in 2000. He can be reached at potsticker@prodigy.net. Views expressed do not reflect CADC policy nor were they reviewed by CADC.

TOM'S MAGIC TRICK: Back in 1999, then former Board of Supervisor President, former teacher and comedian had almost the last laugh. **Tom Ammiano** nearly won the mayor's race by winning a November write-in vote in the primary. But he got outmaneuvered in the December runoff by the wiliest – **Willie Brown** got Republicans to support him, shifted to the political center-right, and attracted overwhelming support within the Asian Pacific American community. End result: 57% Brown, 43% Ammiano. Since it's the Looney Year of the Rabbit, it's time for San Francisco to pull a bunny out of the olde magic hat: **Ed Lee** for mayor.

MR. ED AS DARK HORSE?: Since becoming acting mayor, Ed Lee is an often speculated candidate – even though he says he wants to return as San Francisco City Administrator. Nevertheless, Lee will be on the ballot this June when voters will decide whether to exempt him from a ban forbidding a public official from receiving an immediate appointment. Ostensibly, the measure allows Lee to resume his City Administrator job after he completes his term as S.F. Mayor. Although reluctant, this sets up a June mayoral poll as to how much voters like Ed for the permanent job – five months before they decide a mayor for a permanent four year term from a growing pool of candidates that include Asian Pacific Americans like State Senator **Leland Yee**, Board of Supervisors President **David Chiu** and Assessor-Recorder **Phil Ting**. As reluctant as Lee is, this might be the opportunity for pro-Lee supporters to boost his candidacy for November...



Mayor Ed Lee

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FIRST TEST FOR LEE: How? As a ballot measure, various folks can submit official and paid ballot arguments praising Lee which more than 425,000 voters will get to see. However, that measure is unlikely to escape scrutiny since the office of City Attorney **Dennis Herrera**, who's also a mayoral candidate, shares the task of keeping the voter handbook neutral... If 70 to 80 percent support the measure (Lee received a 56% favorable to 3% unfavorable in a mid-February S.F. Chamber poll), that landslide could shape perception that Lee is doing a good job as mayor – just months before the last day to file for the November mayoral race....

LEE'S MINEFIELD: However, Lee does have a minefield to cross. At the top of the list, Lee will have to balance a city budget that's \$383 million in the hole. Lee is likely to demand cuts – which will include public employee givebacks – pay, furlough days, health and retirement benefits. That could engender the ire of public employee unions who could campaign against the proposition and basically Lee. And they're no stranger to this. Last November, labor hammered Public Defender **Jeff Adachi's** measure to roll back health and retirement benefits. Not only did they defeat Prop B, 57%-43%, but they also sidetracked Adachi's rising political star after he wrested the public defender's post from **Kimiko Burton** – scion of the Burton political family...

TWO'S A COUPLE, THREE'S A CROWD?: It's about time that Asian American political insiders come to grips with ranked choice voting especially in this coming mayor's race. In a conventional election in a single seat election (like mayor) where a majority wins in a primary or runoff, the conventional wisdom was that too many APA candidates would tap and divide the same number of APA votes and resources. That was the perception in the 1980s and 1990s. However, rank choice can work where there's a political synergy among Asian American candidates as APA votes rank APA candidates for first, second and third choices. That was the case in supervisor district 4 (2006) where votes of police commissioner **Doug Chan** and legislative aide **Jaynry Mak** buoyed dark horse businessman **Ed Jew** to become supervisor over businessman **Ron Dudum**. Citywide in 2005, **Phil Ting** retained the Assessor-Recorder seat by the benefit of former deputy Assessor-Recorder **Ron Chun's** votes from 3rd place and outdistancing Supervisor **Gerardo Sandoval**... However, the dirty secret is the sizeable number of people who don't exercise all three ranked choices and decide to choose only none, one or two candidates...



RETREAT HIGHLIGHTS

SACRAMENTO, Calif._ In January, new President **Sam Kwong** and more than 25 club directors, officers, executive committee members and guests assembled to review 2010, assess trends for 2011 and 2012 and ultimately devise priorities and plans. Among the highlights:

2010 RECAP

Changing of the Guard - The club enters 2011 with the changing of the guard locally for mayor, supervisor, district attorney, police chief. San Francisco has its first Chinese American mayor by appointment. Councilmember **Jean Quan** with her ranked choice upset became Oakland mayor. However, the first Asian Pacific American mayor of a major metropolis was **Norman Mineta** of San Jose in 1971.

Student Assignments - The club has continued to be on the forefront of student assignments since the 1990s. Since winning a federal court decision overturning the SFUSD's anti-Chinese student assignment system, CADC has continued fighting for a fairer system – the latest being the submission of the Students First non-binding measure for the 2011 ballot.

Endorsements and “Moderate” Supervisors - CADC, last year under Pres. **Michael Chan**, sent a slate mailer to thousands of voters and had endorsed a number of successful candidates, including **Carmen Chu** and **Scott Wiener** who are moderating influences on the board, while progressive-leaning, **Jane Kim** – another club candidate – is considered a swing vote. The moderate shift of supervisors presents an opportunity for the club.

County Committee - The club also ran three members in the hotly contested S.F. Democratic County Central Committee race. While an uphill battle, CADC – originally chartered by the California Democratic Council in 1958 – used these races to educate the public and party activists about CADC and Chinese American stances on business, education and homeownership.

THE FUTURE – 2011 AND 2012

Long-term Direction - The club is formulating an overarching strategic direction for the coming years. That touches upon the slow economic recovery impacting small businesses, jobs, government budgets – all of which affects the Chinese American community.

Commissions - Although “moderate” Mayor **Ed Lee** will appoint some commissioners for the rest of 2011, the next mayor after Lee will have a major impact on new commission selections. That presents an opportunity to push for more



The Retreat brought together Calvin Louie, Bonnie Low, Helen Lum, Bayard Fong, Teresa Dueque and Sandy Su.

Photo: Ron Lee

Chinese American commissioners.

Student Assignments - Club members will be stumping for the Students First non-binding measure in 2011 to reform student assignments. The Students First measure like JROTC restoration in 2008 has the potential to affect assignments but also affect the outcomes of mayoral, district attorney and other races in 2011.

County Committee - The club could build upon the 2010 committee campaigns for the 2012 county races. Prevailing SFDCCC members under Chair **Aaron Peskin** failed to shift the board of supervisors further left and appoint the first progressive mayor since **Art Agnos** in 1988.

Peskin's county committee allies will defend their seats early in 2012. And once again, the club can elect candidates or endorse allies to the 24 member body. Success of club candidates and allies depend on building bridges and seeking mutual support from other organizations in and outside the Chinese/Asian Pacific American community.

Consultant and Candidate Reflections - The club can tap into a wealth of political experience. At the retreat, JROTC (Yes on V, Nov. 2008) campaign manager **Johnny Wang** and District 10 supervisor candidates **Marlene Tran** and **Teresa Duque** shared their thoughts. Wang touched upon the importance of organizing grassroots support for neighborhood schools and student assignment reform. Duque and Tran talked about organizing early, resources, visibility and educating voters about ranked choice voting.

Many current and former elected officials and candidates serve on the CADC board: College Board member **Lawrence Wong**, former school board members **Eddie Chin** and **Ben Tom** and former school board candidate **Bayard Fong** and former county committee members and candidates like **Alicia Wang**, **Henry Louie**, **Richard Ow**.

Late Voter Handbooks - The board noted that the Elections Department consistently undermines Chinese/Latino voters by delaying mailing of Chinese and Spanish language voter handbooks.

SEE THE “C”: APAs and REDISTRICTING



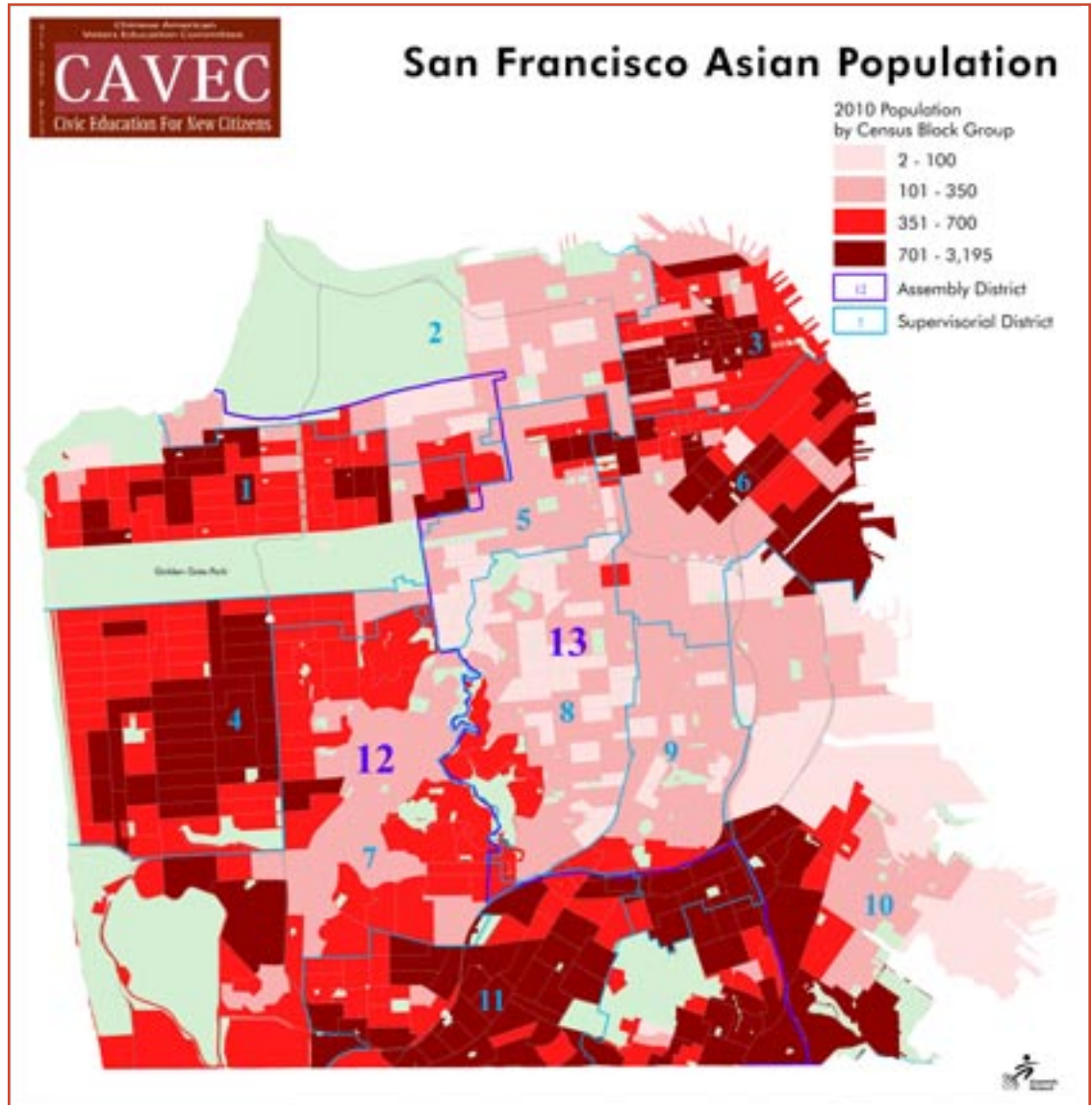
by Samson Wong

IMPACT OF OVER 10 YEARS: With 2010 census numbers being released, new redistricting panels for congress, state legislature and board of equalization will redraw political boundaries. Asian Pacific Americans (APA), while protected under the Voting Rights Act, are not automatically guaranteed seats. However, with reapportionment out of the hands of the California legislature, APAs will have to live with the new districts of 2012 for the next 10 years and beyond.

OLD LINES: Lines drawn in 2001 by the legislature led to many first time APA gains. Among them, CADC ally and Assemblyman **Kevin Shelley** sat on the reapportionment committee and helped craft western San Francisco’s and a slice of northern San Mateo County into the 12th Assembly District. Shelley’s work left the 12th as the state’s largest APA district eventually electing **Leland Yee** and then Assembly Speaker pro tem **Fiona Ma**. With Yee now state senator and running for mayor, Ma sits in an assembly seat that is a launch pad for state senate. Elsewhere, the California Board of Equalization became an APA majority in 2007 with **Judy Chu**, **Michelle Park Steel**, **Betty Yee** and **Controller John Chiang** as an ex-officio member. Major APA-elected officials ran or won reelection from substantial or heavily APA redistricted seats and rose to high political perches – including **Wilma Chan**, **Ma**, **Mike Honda**, **Chu**, **Yee**, **Mike Eng**, **Doris Matsui** and others.

This column illustrates the implications of the census and redistricting on APA representation for the past 30 years.

SEE THE “C”: Implications are decade-long for any line



drawing after tabulation of 2010 Census, especially on San Francisco’s APA community...In major citywide elections like mayor, the “C” pattern of APA residents that can be traced from SOMA, north into North Beach/Chinatown, arcing west into the Richmond, curving south into the Sunset and West of Twin Peaks, returning east along neighborhoods near the county line like Outer Mission, Ingleside, Portola and Visitacion Valley....

MAYORAL RACES: The “C” is the victory pattern in citywide elections supporting moderate-leaning mayoral candidates – **Frank Jordan** (1991), **Willie Brown** (1999), **Gavin Newsom** (2003, 2007). The C-pattern also stands for other “C’s” – Chinese American coalition partners of Caucasian, conservative and centrist voters. The C-pattern represents an APA community of interest forming the outlines of reapportioned boundaries for local, state and federal offices

POLITICAL ART: How important is redistricting? San Francisco Democratic Congressman **Phil Burton** is most notable for his political contribution to “modern art.” After the 1980 census and subsequent reapportionment, he transformed

California's congressional makeup from a bare 22-21 edge to a 27-18 advantage for Democrats and thus strengthened party's hold on Congress... A district for brother and incumbent **John Burton** ended up in four counties – Marin, Solano, San Mateo and San Francisco. Phil relinquished parts of his own district to bolster John but weakened himself – opening himself to a 1982 challenge by then GOP **State Senator Milton Marks**. Burton won re-election (my ever first campaign experience thanks to then Burton aide **James Fang**) but he died the following year and was succeeded by his wife **Sala Burton (Nancy Pelosi's predecessor)**. John retired in 1982 and later resurrected himself as state senate president and is currently California Democratic Party chair.

UNITED INTO ONE DISTRICT: With redistricting handled by an independent panel, it's likely that we will not see California congressional or state legislature reapportionments like Burton's in 1982 anymore. However, major APA communities have for a long time been split between former **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** (District 8) and **Rep. Jackie Speier** (District 12) with each representing populations that are 28 percent APA. Pelosi covers north and southeastern S.F. and Speier covers southwest S.F. and extends into heavily Filipino American Daly City to major APA communities like San Bruno, South San Francisco, Millbrae and San Mateo. With the new redistricting panel, it will be interesting whether the APA community is large enough to form one congressional district.

BEYOND SPEIER: Depending on redistricting, Speier's district is the most interesting prospect. Considering that she harbored interest in running for California Attorney General in 2010, she may have an eye on future openings like California Secretary of State since **Debra Bowen** is running for **Jane Harman's** 36th District congressional seat in special election. Like the Harman seat, Speier vacating her own congressional seat could spark entries and attract figures like **State Senator Leland Yee** and San Mateo native **Yul Kwon** - the deputy chief for the Federal Communications Center and winner of the TV *Survivor* series. Kwon and Yee candidacies came up along with Speier's after Rep. Tom Lantos had passed away in 2008.

BURTON "FAMILY": A couple political family names in the 1980s cut their teeth in Phil Burton's office - Kevin Shelley (son of the mayor/congressman) and James Fang (scion of the publishing family)....

SHELLEY'S LEGACY: Shelley eventually sat on the 2001 state assembly reapportionment and bolstered the 12th Assembly District (western San Francisco and northern sliver of San Mateo County). Notably some APA advocates proposed watering down the APA population in the district.

FANG REDISTRICTING: Fang himself oversaw reapportionment of BART districts maximizing representation of Asian American (Fang's District 8), LGBT (**Tom Radulovich** District 9) and African American neighborhoods (**Lynette Sweet** District 10). BART handles its own redistricting

NEED POLITICAL ART?: Do APAs have to rely on redistricting to maximize APA representation? No. The community has demonstrated that APA candidates can win in low APA districts. Democrats **Doris Matsui**, **David Wu** and

Judy Chu have succeeded in Congress or former San Jose Mayor and **Rep. Norman Mineta** or former **Governor Gary Locke** of Washington. Republicans like California Board of Equalization member **Michelle Park Steel**, recently defeated Congressman **Joseph Cao** from New Orleans or former Congressman and now Louisiana **Governor Bobby Jindal** and South Carolina **Governor Nikki Haley** have won seats. This illustrates possibilities in San Francisco where APA candidates could win in traditionally non-APA and mostly Anglo strongholds like District 2 (Marina, 14% APA in 2010 Census), District 5 (Haight Ashbury/Japantown, 17% APA in 2010) and the heavily LGBT District 8 (Castro/Upper Market, 12% APA in 2010)

SAN FRANCISCO: The community will have to watch out for local reapportionment moves affecting eleven San Francisco county supervisor districts in 2012. If boundaries need adjustment, a nine member panel appointed by the mayor, supervisors and elections commission could enhance or dilute APA community representation in key districts. Here are some possibilities.

HISTORIC APA SUPERVISOR DISTRICTS – 1, 3 and 4 (since 1970 Census)

DISTRICT 1 (RICHMOND): If district lines move north of California Street, that could moderate the district, perhaps make it less APA (43% as of 2000 and 2010) and hurt progressive-leaning **Eric Mar's** re-election in 2012 and enhance moderates like Sue Lee or CADC board member Alicia Wang...

DISTRICT 4 (SUNSET): In the 1980s, there was a failed progressive attempt to gerrymander the Sunset by cutting the future APA majority district with a west-east boundary on Ortega Street. The district is APA majority district (53% as of 2000 and 57% as of 2010) electing four consecutive Chinese Americans: Leland Yee, Fiona Ma, **Ed Jew** and **Carmen Chu**....

DISTRICT 3 (CHINATOWN / NORTH BEACH): Liberal Board President **David Chiu's** APA constituency (47% as of 2000 and 45% as of 2010) could erode if District 2 precincts (13% APA as of 2000 and 14% APA as of 2010) are added, which could moderate the district and nudge Chiu to the center or favor candidates like **Joseph Alioto** or **Claudine Cheng** in 2012....

LATEST APA DISTRICT – 11 (since the 1990 census)

DISTRICT 11 (EXCELSIOR / OMI): Like District 10, part of the heavily APA Portola was gerrymandered out of the district, making it less APA than the 46 percent as of the 2000 Census and 51 percent as of 2010. This district represented by **John Avalos** is ready to elect a qualified Chinese or Filipino American...

EMERGING APA DISTRICTS – 6 AND 7 (since 2000 or 2010 censuses)

DISTRICT 7 (WEST OF TWIN PEAKS): **Mabel Teng**, who lost the district (32% APA as of 2000 and 34% as of 2010) barely in a 2000 low turnout runoff, proved that an APA could win in one of the city's most conservative districts. The seat's been held by Teng opponent **Tony Hall** who was succeeded by his former aide **Sean Elsbernd**. He's termed out in 2012. It's possible that District 7 will increase in APA residents with redistricting adding

more APAs from APA majority Districts 4 or 11.

DISTRICT 6 (SOMA/LITTLE SAIGON): The Census (25% APA as of 2000 and 28% as of 2010) will be very revealing about the district that **Jane Kim**, the first Korean American supervisor, represents. APA households are sprouting in Little Saigon (Tenderloin) and following building booms in SOMA, Treasure Island and Mission Bay since the 1990's.

DISTRICT 10

(POTRERO HILL /BAYVIEW/ VISITACION): Progressive-leaning *Bay Guardian* newspaper profiled the forgotten" district in 2010 – by ignorantly forgetting to talk to community leaders like neighborhood activists **Teresa Duque**, **Marlene Tran** or school board member Hydra Mendoza from an emerging APA community. In the 2010 supervisor races, Duque and Tran ran. Duque's ranked choice votes buoyed Tran into a stunning third place finish in the final rankings behind winner **Malia Cohen** and challenger **Tony Kelly**. It's a district that has an APA plurality (30% as of 2000 and 36% as of 2010) now superseding the once African American plurality. This district could be more APA if not for the 2002 gerrymander slicing the heavily APA Portola neighborhood into mostly Latino District 9 (Mission) represented by **David Campos**...

CADC Issues Committee Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2011

CHAIR: EDDIE CHIN

MEMBERS: SAM KWONG, CALVIN LOUIE, MICHAEL CHAN, SAMSON WONG, ALICIA WANG, BAYARD FONG, HELEN LUM, STAN CHAN, MARGARET LEE, RON LEE, SUSIE LEE, VICTOR SEETO, BQ SEETO, AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: EDDIE CHIN, CALVIN LOUIE, STAN CHAN, HELEN LUM; BAYARD FONG*, VICTOR SEETO* (CAME LATER AT 7:30 PM)

Meeting commences at 6:30 pm with the above members on the following items

1. General update remarks from each members
2. ATT Scheduled meeting - Updated the members by Eddie that a meeting has been scheduled with Marc Blakeman, Vice President of Community Affairs, on 2/25/11, at his office. CADC officers will meet with him. It was suggested that Sam Kwong, Calvin Louie, Eddie Chin and Stan Chan should meet to discuss talking points prior to this meeting. Stan Chan wants ATT to sponsor a table at his group's event, but it was stated we should establish long working relationship with ATT. (group would meet after the CAAGE event 2/18/11)

3. **STUDENT FIRST PROPOSITION:**

Per Helen, Bayard or Victor would have the latest updates on this group. Will table this item for next meeting or if they will be here later. (Subsequently, Victor came and updated the members.) His remarks were that CADC attended two press conferences with them, and gave them \$500.00 last year. At present, Victor is the Board Secretary to the group. The group is registered as a "PAC". Michelle Rhee of Sacramento

has first right to the name of this group. Hence, the group will likely be known as STUDENT FIRST-SF. Chris Miller is still the chair at this time. Bayard remarked there have been internal struggles among the group and they were to run a slate with multi-ethnic education candidates. That did not happen. Chris Miller is going to running in 2012.

4. **SFUSD / LOCAL HIRING PROSOSAL / DRAFT:**

Eddie recapped the CADC meeting of 2/10/11 where Stan Chan was to work with the two school commissioners on the School Facilities Committee and do a draft of a resolution on a local hiring school policy. Stan wants the school's old hiring MBE/WBE policy as a starting point for his draft. Action Item: Eddie will check with the school to see if school have on file the old policy.

5. **AB-376 – BAN OF SALE, DISTRIBUTION, POSSESSION OR TRADE OF SHARK FINS**

This was a last minute resolution sent through e-mails to various members by Senator Yee. However, none of the members present had opportunity to read it to act on it. Matter was tabled to the next meeting.

Asked if Victor was bringing this resolution to be sponsored by CADC, he stated yes. Informed him not many of the members have read the AB376 nor the modifications proposed by Senator Yee. So this item was tabled to next meeting, 3/17/2011. Victor will forward the body of AB-376 and what sections are being modified by this resolution.

7:30 am: Both members Bayard Fong and Victor Seeto showed up. Eddie updated them on the above items.

6. Other items: Bayard Fong commented on the new school student assignment and how the parents are not sure of the outcome. He is working with Patricia Gray, the school Area Superintendent for the Southeast sector of the City and will update us of any .new development.

NEXT MEETING: Members suggested a lunch meeting. Will try it out this time slot.

MARCH 17, 2011

ALL SEASONS RESTAURANT - 5238 Diamond Heights Blvd, SF 94131 (415) 282-8883

Time: 11:30 am

Submitted

Eddie Chin

February 25, 2011



Issues Committee meeting at Utopia Restaurant

(Photo: K.Bond)



High-Speed Rail Projects:

A Fast Track To Nowhere For Minority-Owned Businesses?

Authors: Diana LaCome, President, National Concilio of America; and Harry Alford, President and CEO, National Chamber of Commerce

On December 8 2010, The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights of the Bay Area filed a complaint to the against the Department of Transportation against the California High-Speed Rail Authority for lack of minority business participation in the California High Speed Rail Project. The following is an open letter from concerned business associations. Detail of the Complaint can be found at : <http://www.lccr.com/TitleVIMinorityBusinessComplaintAgainstCAHighSpeedRail.pdf>

The Obama Administration is pouring billions of dollars into high-speed rail projects across the country, touting them as a way to stimulate local economies in recessionary times. Just this week, President Obama submitted a budget plan to Congress, seeking approval of an additional \$8 billion for such ventures. Yet as these projects get underway, this massive infusion of federal money appears to be bypassing the very businesses that help bolster our local economies – small and minority-owned businesses.

Data is making it increasingly apparent that minority-owned businesses – among those hardest hit in the current economic climate – are being largely shut out of bullet train contracting opportunities. California is a prime example of how little minority communities are benefitting from these projects. High-speed rail in the Golden State is designed to link San Francisco to Los Angeles and San Diego, with multiple stops throughout the

Central Valley. The project is estimated to cost approximately \$43 billion, making it the single largest public works venture in the nation.

Yet a civil rights complaint filed recently by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area details how minority-owned businesses are being largely excluded from contracting opportunities on this massive project. Through a restrictive procurement system and a *laissez-faire* attitude, the state agency established to oversee the project appears to be funneling nearly all contracting dollars to large non-minority – and in some cases foreign-owned – corporations.

For example, on 10 multi-million dollar design contracts already awarded, barely a dozen of the 134 prime and subconsultants are minority-owned firms. This includes those with exceedingly small contracts in comparison with overall contracting dollars, such as a minority-owned business with a \$100,000 subconsulting contract on a \$75 million prime contract. Statistics on participation by small businesses – which many minority-owned businesses are – paint an equally grim picture. Over the past six fiscal years, less than four percent of

contracting dollars for California's bullet train have gone to small businesses.

California is not alone in seeing this trend. In Florida, the Obama Administration has committed over \$2 billion to a bullet train line that would link Tampa to Orlando, with a possible extension to Miami at a later date. A statewide coalition of minority-owned businesses in Florida recently called upon the bullet train project there to take proactive steps to open up procurement opportunities, fearing that otherwise all of the contracting would remain only within an insular "old boys" network of firms.

There is certainly no shortage of minority-owned businesses that are ready, willing, and able to do the necessary work if given the opportunity. A recent study by the California Department of Transportation found that hundreds of minority-owned civil engineers, structural engineers, land surveyors, and other professionals that are ready and able to participate in large-scale public works projects such as the high-speed rail.

When minority-owned businesses are allowed to compete on an equal footing in a fair and open system, they win contract awards. And when that happens, the ripple effect is astounding. Growing businesses hire workers, often from minority communities. They spend money locally and contribute to community re-vitalization. But when procurement systems are closed and insular, as bullet train projects are shaping up to be, none of these benefits are realized.



California High Speed Rail

Fortunately, it is not too late for the Obama Administration to reverse this trend. Though billions of dollars have already been spent on these high-speed rail projects, many more billions are still at stake. The federal government holds the purse strings. It can – and should – insist that contracting opportunities funded by federal taxpayer dollars be open to all on an equal basis.

The civil rights complaint filed by minority-owned businesses in California demands that federal agencies suspend all funding to that state's high-speed rail project until its contracting practices are made fair and non-discriminatory. We support that effort, and call upon the Obama Administration to go even further. The Administration should re-examine federally-funded high-speed rail projects across the country, insist that minority-owned businesses be afforded equal opportunity to work on these ventures, and withhold funding until closed procurement systems are opened up.

Without immediate federal intervention, this multi-billion opportunity to jumpstart the economy will be squandered, and high-speed rail will end up as a fast-track to nowhere for minority businesses and the communities they help.

Diana LaCome is President of National Concilio of America, a non-profit organization promoting Hispanic business interests nationally.

Harry Alford is the President and CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce, a non-profit organization dedicated to economically empowering and sustaining African American communities through entrepreneurship and capitalistic activity.



February General Meeting Highlights



Rodrigo Santos

Appearing before the general membership meeting on February 10th 2011 include Mr. **Rodrigo Santos**, President of the San Francisco Coalition for Responsible Growth (SFCRG). SFCRG is a broad-based organization that embraces diversity and seeks a moderate political position that considers all constituencies. SFCRG wants to shape the future of San Francisco. SFCRG advocates for high-density housing, mass transit, jobs for

all, small businesses, quality of life, plus timely and predictable public policy. SFCRG members know that responsible growth is necessary for San Francisco to thrive as a world-class city. CADC believe that many of the values SFCRG is concerned with are similar concerns of the Chinese community, "this is an excellent opportunity to see how both organizations can work together particularly in the heated mayoral election" said Sam Kwong, President of CADC.

During Mr. Santos presentation, he spoke of the shift by voters leaning towards more moderate candidates during the past November election. They are proud that their organization was successful in getting most of their candidates elected. SFCRG is also active in monitoring land use legislation and policies that has adverse effect on small businesses. CADC believe in those similar issues and we look forward to a year we can collaborate and put a stop to the ideological resolutions from the legislators over the past years.

The other presenter at the meeting is newly elected School Board member **Emily Murase**. During one of the School Board Meeting, she noticed that there were many contract modifications

being brought before the Board for approval, with little or no explanations given on the lack of participation by MWBE in some of these large amount change orders. Emily brought this to the attention of CADC because the Club has always looked after the interests of small minority contractors.

Upon further examination in the Agenda documents, we find a consistent statement cited by **David Goldin**, Chief Facility



Emily Murase

Officer of the SFUSD. "In its efforts to increase participation for all ethnicity's and genders, the District has increased its own advertising efforts to include publications and listing with the greatest circulation to contractors, subcontractors. In addition, the bidding documents include an outreach certification which requires the contractors to solicit subcontractors through publications of an advertisement and/or listing in at least two (2) of an approved list of publications and/or listing." However this same statement occurs consistently from years past, yet no improvements can be documented. Members of CADC felt that failure of the District to address the inequity requires re-examination of the procurement policies and the perhaps the performance evaluation of the Mr. Goldin by the Administration. **Stanley Chan**, a member of the CADC Board of Directors and also a member of the Asian American Contractors Association will take on this task. The Club thanked Emily for bringing this to the attention to the Club. As a final note, we also should be asking what is the data on local hire for all these School improvements? This is another subject for investigation. (Photos: Sam Kwong)

CADC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Current membership dues good until 3/31/11

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver Dragon \$50* | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Dragon \$100* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiery Dragon \$500* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual + significant other \$45 | |

Membership starting 4/1/11

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver Dragon \$50* | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Dragon \$100* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiery Dragon \$500* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual + significant other \$55 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special 3 Year Individual Membership \$100 | |

*Silver, Golden and Fiery Dragon members will be listed in the newsletter for the duration of the year.

Send to:
CADC

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