

**MEETING MINUTES  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)**

**Wednesday, March 22, 2006  
7:30 AM – 9:00 AM  
Fremont City Hall  
Council Chambers**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 a.m.

<b>Members Present:</b>	Lon Vredeveld	DDA Chair
	Dusty Bitson	Downtown Business Owner
	Marianne Boerigter	Director, Newaygo County Council for the Arts
	Lorna Kosztowny	Downtown Property Owner
	Gerry Rich	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	Ron Vleim	Executive Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce

<b>Members Absent:</b>	Kim Deur	Downtown Property/Business Owner
	James M. Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Ric Zahrt	Fremont Business Owner
	Rob Zeldenrust	Main Street Business Operator

<b>Staff Present:</b>	Richard Rought	Fremont Zoning Administrator
	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Director
	Chris Yonker	Fremont City Manager

<b>Consultant Present:</b>	Rick Stout	Fleis & Vandenbrink
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**Welcoming Remarks and Introduction of new DDA Member**

Chairman Vredeveld welcomed the DDA.

**Approval of Minutes**

At the time the DDA considered the minutes from the March 8, 2006 DDA meeting, there was not a quorum present. Therefore, the minutes will be voted on at a future meeting.

**Update on Fremont Community & Business Expo 2006**

Ron Vleim reported that the Community & Business Expo would take place on Friday evening, March 24, 2006 from 5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. and on Saturday, March 25, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Fremont High School. He said that the Chamber had sold enough booths for them to break even and that the Chamber advertised the event so he hoped that attendance would be high. Michele Ribant indicated that the City will have a booth at the Expo to promote the work of the City including the work of the DDA.

**Update on Downtown Fremont Spring Clean-up Day**

Chairman Vredeveld announced that spring clean-up day downtown Fremont would be as follows:

Friday, May 12, 2006: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 13, 2006: 8:00 a.m. – noon

Michele Ribant reported that she had been in contact with the high schools and asked for volunteers for the Saturday morning portion of the spring clean-up event. She indicated that block captains, who include Lon Vredeveld, Marianne Boerigter, Kim Deur, Ron Vleim and herself would distribute flyers to the downtown businesses to advertise the event. She also said that the captains will be provided with flyers and volunteer request forms and that if anyone needed volunteers on Saturday, May 13 for clean up assistance, they are to complete the volunteer request form and return it to her by May 1, 2006. Ms. Ribant indicated she would try to make sure there are enough volunteers to meet the demand.

### **Update on Recycling/Refuse Service for Downtown Fremont**

Chairman Vredeveld informed the DDA that each downtown business/property owner is being provided via their block captain with a questionnaire on refuse and recycling usage. Michele Ribant asked that the questionnaires be returned to her by May 1, 2006. Ms. Ribant indicated that she is working with Allied Waste to determine how the DDA can best structure a coordinated refuse/recycling plan for downtown businesses in the four block commercial core on Main Street between Merchant and Mechanic Avenues.

### **Discussion on Downtown Public Art Plan**

Michele Ribant provided everyone with a copy of the following documents:

- Draft Downtown Fremont Public Art Program Guidelines
- Spreadsheet on Proposed Fremont Public Art – Location and Types of Projects

She said that the aforementioned documents were just a starting point in terms of developing a Downtown Public Art Plan for Fremont. She indicated that there is a grant opportunity for an art project and that the proposal is due on May 1, 2006. Ms. Ribant explained that the grant opportunity should focus on a collaborative community project. As an example, she indicated that we could have an art contest which involved painting utility boxes downtown.

Marianne Boerigter suggested that we conduct a banner art contest for special events (Farmers Market, Baby Food Festival, etc.). It was also suggested that Fremont have seasonal banners made that could be displayed throughout the year in conjunction with the special events banners. It was suggested that banners could include the name of the businesses downtown as advertisements and that each business could pay for the banner with their name on it. It was further suggested that in terms of the banners with advertisements on them that the City could pay a portion and the business owner could pay a portion of the cost of the banner. Ms. Ribant indicated that the Public Art and Signage/Streetscape Subcommittees would have a meeting to fine-tune the suggestions and that they would report back to the full DDA.

### **Presentation by Fleis & Vandenbrink**

Rick Stout talked about signage. He informed the DDA of the following:

- Names on signs need to be simple (e.g., Library), so they may be read easily.
- Decisions need to be made as to where the “Welcome to Fremont” signs should be placed. Should they be placed at the City limits or at the approach to downtown? (Lon Vredeveld indicated that we need to be inclusive and that the signage should serve the entire City – not just the downtown.)
- Welcome signs do not have to be large; points of welcome could be tastefully designed with low voltage lighting and handsome landscaping.
- A small information kiosk near the alleyways could be a useful sign downtown Fremont.

The DDA gave Rick Stout feedback on the custom design he presented for signage. The DDA indicated that they liked the signage design but that the use of the color red may be inappropriate.

Rick presented the DDA with a design of a downtown intersection which included landscape treatments. Dick Rought indicated that the intersections need to be designed to accommodate truck traffic. The general feel of the DDA was that they liked the intersection design.

### **Update on DDA Financing**

Chris Yonker reviewed the potential funding sources available to the DDA to accomplish its goals. He provided the DDA with a handout entitled, "Potential Funding Sources – DDA Capital & Operating Costs". He explained that since proposal A in 1994, new captures can only come from the City, the Fremont District Library and Newaygo County levies and that we can no longer capture taxes from the Fremont Public Schools or NC-RESA or the State Education Tax (SET). He explained that in order for the DDA to continue to capture the amount they currently capture, the City would have to contribute considerably more. He outlined that there are other opportunities to fund DDA projects, such as re-instituting a parking special assessment, grants, etc., and he reviewed all the opportunities outlined on the funding source list he provided.

### **Update on Rental Rehabilitation Program**

Michele Ribant advised that every property owner in downtown Fremont who has upper level space will be invited to a meeting in April to learn how they can participate in the Fremont Rental Rehabilitation Program.

### **Discussion on Downtown Façade Program**

Michele Ribant informed the DDA that in their packets they received a handout entitled, "Questions relating to the Fremont Façade Improvement Program". She indicated that she will set up a meeting with the Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee, so they can address the issues outlined in the handout. Once she has direction from the Subcommittee, she will create a proposal for a façade program that the entire DDA can review.

### **Next Meeting**

Lon Vredeveld announced that the next DDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 5, 2006 from 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Fremont City Hall.

Chairman Vredeveld announced that Dusty Bitson was approved by the City Council to be a member on the DDA; he welcomed Mr. Bitson to the DDA.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business of the DDA, the DDA adjourned at 9:37 a.m.