

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

**Wednesday, May 17, 2006
3:00 – 5:00 AM
Fremont City Hall
Council Chambers**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM.

Members Present:	Lon Vredeveld	DDA Chair
	Marianne Boerigter	Director, Newaygo County Council for the Arts
	Lorna Kosztowny	Downtown Property Owner
	Gerry Rich	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	James M. Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Ron Vliem	Executive Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
	Rob Zeldenrust	Main Street Business Operator
Members Absent:		
	Dusty Bitson	Downtown Business Owner
	Kim Deur	Downtown Property/Business Owner
	Tom Schuiteman	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	Ric Zahrt	Fremont Business Owner
Staff Present:		
	Richard Rought	Fremont Zoning Administrator
	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Director
	Chris A. Yonker	Fremont City Manager
Others Present:		
	Len Andersen	Downtown Property Owner
	Jeanne Caris	Community Leader
	Ted Caris	Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee Member
	Dick Conley	Fremont City Councilmember
	Lindsay Hager	Director, NCCS Center for Nonprofit Housing
	Brian Karsten	Downtown Property Owner
	Rebecca Laing-Austin	Downtown Business Owner
Consultant Present:	Rick Stout	Fleis & Vandenbrink
Guest Speaker:	Robbert McKay	Historic Architect, MI State Historic Preservation Office

Welcoming Remarks

Chair Vredeveld welcomed the DDA and other members of the community who were invited to learn more about the benefits and responsibilities of establishing a historic district in Fremont.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2006 DDA meeting.

Update on Fremont Museum Economic Feasibility Study

Mayor Rynberg indicated that the Fremont Museum Economic Feasibility Study, which was funded by the Fremont DDA and the Fremont Area Community Foundation, has been provided to the City. He went

on to say that each DDA member received a copy of the final Study and a copy of the original request for proposals (RFP) and that today the DDA must determine whether the study met the objectives in the RFP in order for the DDA to accept the Study. After the DDA received answers to a couple of questions regarding the due date and the cost of the Study, a motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the Fremont Museum Economic Feasibility Study and recommend its acceptance to the City Council.

Presentation on the Benefits and Responsibilities of Establishing a Downtown Historic District

Robbert McKay, Historic Architect from the MI State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), gave a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the role of the SHPO in Michigan and the strategies and tools that local communities can use to promote history. He specifically talked about how and why a community would want to establish a historic district. Some of the points in his presentation that were especially relevant to Fremont included the following:

- Fremont's downtown core commercial area would most likely qualify for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district as earlier determined in October 2005 by Robert Christensen, SHPO's National Register Coordinator.
- Mr. McKay explained that if the downtown commercial area were to be listed in the National Register as a historic district, it would not require property owners to adhere to onerous regulations. A property owner would only be subject to specific regulations if his/her property was located in a district and he/she voluntarily chose to take advantage of a program offered by SHPO or the federal government, such as state/federal historic property renovation credits.
- Mr. McKay also indicated that there could be at least three other historic districts in the City in the following residential areas:
 - Main Street east of downtown
 - North side of downtown
 - South side of downtown
- It was explained that if we listed Fremont's downtown in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district, the property owners within that district could apply for federal tax credits. He pointed out that because Fremont's population is less than 5,000, property owners can take advantage of both federal and state tax credits without having to establish a local historic district. Note: Populations over 5,000 are required to have a local historic district in order to take advantage of both tax credits.
- Mr. McKay indicated that he has never seen where property values within a historic district have gone down; he said they have either remained constant or have gone up.
- Mr. McKay advised that it could take at least eight (8) months to establish a historic district in downtown Fremont.

Discussion on Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan

Rick Stout displayed boards outlining the DDA's final choices of street furniture. There were two collections presented: Collection A and Collection B. The DDA decided they preferred the more sleek design of the bench in Collection A, which was a different choice than the original Victorian style bench they selected as their # 1 choice at the last meeting. After some discussion, the DDA concluded that overall they preferred the design of the furniture in Collection A but that for bike racks and planters they may want to use styles from both collections. By doing so, the DDA could select a specific style that was compatible with a particular location.

Stout reported that he would have the Fremont Pattern Book ready for review by the next DDA meeting.

Next Meeting

The DDA decided on the following meeting dates:

Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee Meeting

Thursday, June 1, 2006

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

DDA Meeting

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Public Art Subcommittee/Streetscape Signage Subcommittee Joint Meeting

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

DDA Meeting (Public Meeting on Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan)

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Board, the DDA adjourned at 5:12 PM.