

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

**Wednesday, May 23, 2007  
7:30 AM – 9:00 AM  
Fremont City Hall  
Council Chambers**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m.

<b>Members Present:</b>	Lon Vredeveld	DDA Chair
	Dusty Bitson	Downtown Business Owner
	Marianne Boerigter	Executive Director, Newaygo County Council for the Arts
	Dusty Bitson	Downtown Business Owner
	Rebecca Laing-Austin	Downtown Business Owner
	Gerry Rich	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	James M. Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Ron Vliem	Executive Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
	Rob Zeldenrust	Downtown Property/Business Owner
<b>Members Absent:</b>	Kim Deur	Downtown Property/Business Owner
	Lorna Kosztowny	Downtown Property Owner
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Director
<b>Guests Present:</b>	Bonnie Erber	DDA Marketing Subcommittee Chair

**Welcoming Remarks**

Chair Vredeveld welcomed the DDA.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Rebecca Laing-Austin, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2007 DDA meeting, as submitted, and to accept the following sets of minutes for information:

- Public Art Subcommittee minutes (4-24-07)
- Public Art Subcommittee minutes (5-02-07)
- Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee minutes (4-11-07)
- Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee minutes (4-25-07)
- Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee minutes (5-10-07)
- Marketing Subcommittee minutes (5-15-07)
- DDA Progress Report #6
- DDA Progress Report #7

**Update on Downtown NE Public Parking Lot & Market Pavilion Construction**

It was reported that the construction in the NE Downtown public parking lot was due to be completed by July 4, 2007. Chair Vredeveld announced that the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new market pavilion, the Fremont Market Place, will be on Thursday, July 26, 2007 at 4:30 p.m. at the Market Place and that all DDA members are invited.

## Update on Rental Rehabilitation Program

Michele Ribant reported that the Rental Rehab Program is at a crossroads right now in that many of the property owners are deciding whether to proceed based upon the bids received. She indicated that the property owners of 25 W. Main Street withdrew from the Program but that another property owner has expressed an interest in taking part in the Program, so as to take advantage of the grant funding. She indicated we should know specifically which property owners will continue with the Program by the end of July. She said the goal is still to have the projects completed by December 2007.

## Update on DDA Subcommittee Work:

### Marketing Subcommittee

Bonnie Erber, chair of the Marketing Subcommittee, expressed how important it is to communicate what the DDA is doing within the community. She indicated that having a City column in the *Times Indicator* is a great way to communicate. She also said that we should put a picture and a list of DDA members in the paper, so the community knows which community members comprise the DDA. Ms. Erber went on to say that we need to get the word out to the other western Michigan newspapers (e.g., Muskegon Chronicle) about the positive things we are doing in Fremont. She informed the DDA that the next meeting of the DDA Marketing Subcommittee will be on Wednesday, June 20, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce. She went on to say that she invited Stephanie Zinn, who is in charge of marketing at Gerber Memorial Health Services, to the next DDA Marketing Subcommittee meeting, so she can share her expertise with the Subcommittee.

Ms. Erber informed the DDA that the City of Fremont was awarded grant funding from USDA Rural Development through the Rural Development Business Enterprise Grant program. She indicated that the grant was awarded to fund elements of the Downtown Marketing Plan. She informed the DDA that the grant award was for \$40,000 but the City may receive \$50,000 if other grant recipients decline their grant award.

Ms. Boerigter commented on one of the elements of the Downtown Marketing Plan. She informed the DDA that the Newaygo County Economic Development Office (NCEDO) may already be providing some of the retail consulting services as outlined in the proposal from Michael Crosson, the retail consultant. Ms. Ribant said she will call NCEDO to make sure there is no duplication of services.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Marianne Boerigter, seconded by Rob Zeldenrust and carried to recommend to the Fremont City Council that the grant award be allocated as follows, depending on the final grant funding awarded:

#### \$40,000 Grant Award

Consulting Services for Merchants: \$20,000  
Place Branding for Downtown Fremont: \$10,000  
Artwork for AT&T Facades: \$10,635  
**Total: \$40,635.00**

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**Total: \$50,635.00**

### **Public Art Subcommittee**

Marianne Boerigter, chair of the Public Art Subcommittee, informed the DDA about the work of the Subcommittee as follows:

- Post Office Site: Ms. Boerigter indicated that Cara O'Brien designed a public art sculpture, a picture of which was included in the agenda packet, for the front of the Fremont Post Office site. She informed the DDA that a grant proposal was submitted to the Fremont Area Community Foundation to fund the sculpture and that we will know in July whether we receive grant funding.
- Pavilion Restroom Site: Ms. Boerigter informed the DDA that the Fremont Rotary Club is donating \$2,000 towards public art for the restroom facility at the Fremont Market Place.
- AT&T Facades: Ms. Boerigter said that funding has been awarded by USDA Rural Development through their Business Enterprise Grant program.
- Yahaba Art Sculpture: Ms. Boerigter indicated that the Yahaba sculpture was not a DDA project, yet she wanted to let them know that the ribbon cutting for the sculpture will be on June 9, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. in front of the Fremont City Hall.

### **Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee**

Marianne Boerigter, chair of the Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee, informed the DDA of the following:

- Nominating Downtown Fremont on the National Register of Historic Places: Ms. Boerigter informed the DDA that questionnaires were sent to downtown property owners asking them about the history of their building. She said that this summer the Subcommittee will work on writing a nomination.
- Façade Program Update: Ms. Boerigter informed the DDA that the property owners of the following buildings submitted applications for façade grants:
  - 12 W. Main Street
  - 13 E. Main Street
  - 11 E. Main Street

She informed the DDA that the Subcommittee is recommending changes to the Downtown Fremont Façade Improvement Program guidelines as outlined in the Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee minutes of May 21, 2007, which were handed out at the meeting. Ms. Boerigter reviewed the proposed changes to the guidelines with the DDA. A motion was then made by Rob Zeldenrust, seconded by Dusty Bitson and carried to recommend to the Fremont City Council that the Downtown Fremont Façade Improvement Program be revised as outlined in the May 21, 2007 Façade /Historic Preservation Subcommittee minutes.

Ms. Boerigter recused herself from the next discussion and vote since she is the Director of the Newaygo County Council for the Arts, and the Council is applying for funding for their building through the Façade Improvement Program located at 13 E. Main Street. Gerry Rich also recused himself from the discussion and vote because his company provided the bids on the project.

Mayor Rynberg took over for Ms. Boerigter and explained that two of the applications (12 W. Main and 11 E. Main) for façade improvement grants were incomplete and that the

applicants were asked to provide more detailed specifications, and the Subcommittee would consider their applications at a later date.

He then explained that the application for 13 E. Main was complete, and the Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee voted to recommend to the DDA that the application for 13 E. Main in Fremont for the amount of \$8,500.00 for the front façade and \$7,550.01 for the rear façade for a total of \$16,050.01 be approved for grant funding through the Downtown Fremont Façade Improvement Program.

A motion was made by Jim Rynberg, seconded by Rebecca Laing-Austin and carried to recommend to the DDA approval of grant funding through the Downtown Fremont Façade Improvement Program in the amount of \$16,050.01 (front façade - \$8,500.00 and rear façade - \$7,550.01) for 13 E. Main Street.

### **Parking Subcommittee**

Lon Vredeveld reported that the DDA Parking Subcommittee would be meeting soon to discuss the following issues:

- Downtown Parking Plan
- Downtown Maintenance Assessment
- Common Refuse
- Common Recycling

### **Signage/Streetscape Subcommittee**

Michele Ribant reported that the Signage/Streetscape Subcommittee has been working on issues related to the following types of signage:

- Signs for Market Pavilion
- Entryway Signage
- Wayfinding Signage

### **Status of Blueprint Downtown Fremont Revitalization Plan**

Chair Vredeveld pointed out that the status report on the efforts of the DDA in implementing the Downtown Blueprint Revitalization Plan was in the agenda packet. He indicated that we have implemented the vast majority of the action items recommended and that in the coming year we will focus on addressing the remaining items on the list.

### **Update on the 2007/2008 DDA Budget**

Michele Ribant reported that the City is proposing to allocate \$40,000 in the 2007/2008 DDA budget for the Downtown Fremont Façade Improvement Program and that the \$40,000 being awarded to the City from USDA Rural Development to fund elements of the Marketing Plan will be included in the budget. She indicated that this past year the City bonded out to pay for the Market Place Pavilion and associated parking lot improvements; therefore, in the coming year not much more is anticipated in terms of project funding unless the DDA had any other ideas. No ideas were expressed.

Marianne Boerigter asked that the City provide the DDA with a 2006/2007 year-end DDA report.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business of the DDA, the meeting adjourned at 9:13 a.m.