

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

PUBLIC FORUM ON DOWNTOWN FREMONT ENHANCEMENT PLAN

**Wednesday, June 21, 2006
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
Fremont City Hall
Council Chambers**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM.

Members Present:	Lon Vredevelde	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
Members Absent:	Dusty Bitson	Downtown Business Owner
	Kim Deur	Downtown Property/Business Owner
	Rebecca Laing-Austin	Downtown Business Owner
	Tom Schuiteman	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	Rob Zeldenrust	Main Street Business Operator
Staff Present:	Richard Rought	Fremont Zoning Administrator
	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Director
	Chris A. Yonker	Fremont City Manager
Consultant Present:	Rick Stout	Fleis & Vandenbrink

Welcoming Remarks

Chair Vredevelde welcomed community members to the meeting and indicated that the DDA wants their involvement with DDA projects. He invited the community members to sign up to serve on any of the following DDA Subcommittees:

- Marketing Subcommittee
- Public Art Subcommittee
- Parking Subcommittee
- Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee
- Business/Property Owner Issues Subcommittee
- Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee

Public Forum on the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan

Rick Stout reported that the DDA, its Subcommittees and staff have spent over 500 hours since November of 2005 working to create the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan. Mr. Stout gave a power-point presentation highlighting the key elements of the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan that will be outlined in the Pattern Book. The following points about the Plan were made by Mr. Stout:

- The Plan focuses on improving the rear entryways that will create a human scale, pedestrian-friendly experience for downtown patrons.
- All four parking lots in the downtown core will be improved; however, the northeast lot requires the most intensive improvements. This is the lot where the proposed farmers market will be located. It was expressed that many locations for the proposed market pavilion were considered and that the NE lot was selected because it is the best location for the market at this point in time.
- The design of the farmers market has been considered in depth by the DDA, the Farmers Market Committee and the farmers. The DDA wants to ensure that the pavilion is functional as well as aesthetically pleasing. The market pavilion will be a multi-purpose structure that will be called the “Fremont Market Place”.
- The general landscaping ideas proposed for the four downtown parking lots and at key downtown intersections were presented. The point was made that trees and landscaping play an important part in the overall urban environment.
- The street furniture selections for the downtown were shown; it was stated that the furniture will be durable and will help create an inviting urban setting.
- Public art will be displayed in various locations downtown; it was stated that public art can have a large positive economic and social impact.
- The idea of having a common refuse container with recycling bins available on each block was expressed. While there may be some inconvenience involved for the business owners, the benefit in terms of creating an attractive overall downtown may be worth the inconvenience.
- New signage plans were shown. It was expressed that a coordinated and attractive sign system will not only aid in conveying information but it will also reinforce the special identity of downtown.

Some concerns and ideas expressed by various community members were as follows:

- The alleys need to be able to accommodate trucks for delivery purposes.
- Having refuse containers located in the middle of the block results in an inconvenience to business owners who will have to walk further to use the containers.
- Some businesses have special needs (banks – lock up their paper refuse) with regard to refuse that must be taken into account when the DDA develops a common refuse/recycling plan.
- There needs to be enough parking spaces downtown to accommodate many renters, employees and patrons. A concern was expressed in relation to having enough parking in the lot where the farmers’ market pavilion will be located.
- Business owners need to park close to their building in order to conduct business efficiently.
- What responsibility will downtown business and property owners have with regard to funding the downtown improvements?
- Signage should help direct community members to the Town & Country Path.
- A kiosk that provides maps of the City’s resources should be a part of the Plan.

Michele Ribant indicated that the City understands that the improvements that are proposed must be functional as well as visually pleasing. She indicated that the City will take into considerations their ideas and concerns as the Plan is fine-tuned.

Lon Vredevelde thanked the group for sharing their thoughts and again encouraged them to be a member of one of the DDA Subcommittees.

The public forum portion of the meeting concluded at 2:50 PM.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the minutes from the June 7, 2006 DDA meeting and the June 14, 2006 DDA Public Art Subcommittee meeting.

Banner Placement Program

The DDA was provided with the following documents relative to the Fremont Banner Program:

- Fremont Banner Program Guidelines
- Cost Estimate for the purchase of holiday and seasonal banners (approximately \$40,000.00)
- Pictures of the 5 banner designs selected for purchase by the DDA Public Art Subcommittee
- Estimate for the City's labor and equipment costs associated with the placement of banners (approximately \$4,680.00)

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to recommend to the Fremont City Council approval of the Banner Program Guidelines and the purchase of holiday and seasonal banners, subject to budget appropriations by the Council.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the DDA, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.