

Meeting Minutes
Fremont Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

Tuesday, September 9, 2008
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Fremont City Hall
Council Chambers

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 a.m. by chair Lon Vredevelde.

Members Present:	Lon Vredevelde	DDA Chair
	Marianne Boerigter	Executive Director, Newwaygo County Council for the Arts
	Rebecca Laing-Austin	Downtown Business Owner
	Gerry Rich	Downtown Property Owner
	James M. Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Bob Stehouwer	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	Ron Vliem	Executive Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
	Chris Youker	Downtown Business Owner
	Rob Zeldenrust	DDA District Business Manager
Members Absent:	Kim Deur	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	Merle Ross	Downtown Business Owner
Staff Present:	Todd Blake	Fremont Acting City Manager
	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Authority

Opening Remarks

Chair Vredevelde started a general discussion on the state of Fremont. Ideas were expressed on some general happenings within the City.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Rob Zeldenrust, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the minutes from the August 7, 2008 and August 28, 2008 DDA meetings and to accept the minutes from the following DDA Subcommittee meetings:

- Public Art Subcommittee Minutes (August 14, 2008)
- Public Art Subcommittee Minutes (August 28, 2008)
- Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee Minutes (August 21, 2008)
- Parking Subcommittee (August 28, 2008)
- Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee Minutes (August 28, 2008)

Review of Request for Proposals for the Fremont Way-finding Signage Program

Lon Vredevelde indicated that the DDA Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee has been reviewing the possible locations for the way-finding signage and giving input as to its design. Michele Ribant said she has sent the way-finding signage plan in relation to the Hospital to Gerber Memorial Health Services for their input and that the entire plan will be provided to the Michigan Department of Transportation for their approval. She indicated the RFP is for the design, manufacturing/fabrication and installation of the way-finding signage. She said the RFP will be sent to design firms and sign companies who have an expertise in design and/or signage and that local sign companies will receive the RFP.

She indicated that a selection committee consisting of two (2) City Council members and up to four (4) DDA members and staff will meet on Wednesday, October 15, 2008 from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. to interview firms for the way-finding signage project. She said if any DDA member was interested in serving on the selection committee that they should let Lon Vredevelde or her know.

A motion was made by Rob Zeldenrust, seconded by Bob Stehouwer and carried to recommend approval of the Request for Proposals for the Fremont Way-finding Signage Program to the Fremont City Council.

Review of DDA Resolution Supporting Newaygo County's Application for Establishment of an Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone

A copy of a map that illustrated which area within the Gerber/Nestle complex in the City of Fremont would fall under the Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone was distributed. A copy of the proposed DDA Resolution supporting the establishment of the Renaissance Zone was included in the agenda packet.

Lon Vredevelde explained that the DDA is being asked to approve a resolution that would support the establishment of an Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone in the City of Fremont. He indicated that the City Council will also be voting on a resolution that would support the proposed Renaissance Zone. He explained that it is actually Newaygo County who is required to make application for the establishment of the Renaissance Zone.

Todd Blake explained that establishment of the Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone is a way to guarantee a Gerber/Nestle presence in Fremont for at least a period of ten (10) to fifteen (15) years. He said the establishment of Renaissance Zones in the past has been a way of encouraging job creation, and they were implemented for new businesses. The proposed Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone is being established to retain an existing business, a valued base employer.

Mr. Blake indicated the development agreement would require Gerber/Nestle to invest 50 million dollars over the first ten (10) years of the agreement and add 200 jobs. He said that if Gerber/Nestle satisfied this requirement, they have an option to extend the Renaissance Zone for another five (5) years as long as they agree to invest another 25 million over the five (5) year period. He said that if Gerber/Nestle does not live up to the agreement, there is a claw back provision that requires them to pay for the loss tax revenue.

Mr. Blake went on to report that the City allocates approximately \$250,000 to \$300,000 a year from the general fund for capital improvement projects and that the City will lose approximately

\$300,000 a year in tax revenue as a result of the establishment of the Renaissance Zone. He said that an incentive package is being put together in which the City can expect to receive 1.5 million during the first five (5) years of the Renaissance Zone. He indicated that valuations in the DDA District should increase over the first five (5) years of the Renaissance Zone period so that the DDA would have capturability in year six (6) and beyond, although he cautioned that there was no guarantee.

Mr. Blake went on to explain that the DDA will still be able to pay the debt portion of the bond payment but that other DDA projects in the coming years will have to be prioritized and careful consideration will have to be given to funding projects. He said this fall the DDA will be asked to amend the TIFA plan to reflect the impact of the proposed Renaissance Zone and to amend the Downtown Development Plan to expand the District boundaries to include Wal-Mart and two (2) automotive dealers.

Mr. Blake concluded by indicating that establishing the Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone will help to make the City of Fremont competitive for future Gerber/Nestle business, which often results in ancillary businesses. He indicated that the approval process for the establishment of the Renaissance Zone will most likely be in December, 2008, and it will be effective in the 2009/2010 fiscal year.

A motion was made by Gerry Rich, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the DDA Resolution Supporting Newaygo County's Application for Establishment of an Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zone in the City of Fremont, Newaygo County, Michigan.

Adjournment

There being no other business of the DDA, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 a.m.