

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FREMONT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE
FREMONT AREA JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, November 28, 2005
3:00 – 4:30 PM
Council Chambers, Fremont City Hall

City Reps to FAJPC Present: Jim Breinling, Mayor Pro Tem
Richard Rought, Zoning Administrator
Chuck Whitman, Planning Commissioner
Jim Rynberg, Mayor

Other City Officials Present: Chris Yonker, City Manager
Michele Ribant, Director of Neighborhood & Economic Development

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 PM.

II. Discussion on issues that may have created distrust between the Joint Planning participating Townships and the City of Fremont.

The City representatives on the Fremont Area Joint Planning Committee (FAJPC) discussed some of the past issues that played into the feelings of distrust between the Townships and the City. The City representatives were provided with position papers from the mid-90's from Dayton Township, Sheridan Charter Township and the City that outlined many of the issues, which included:

- View that current annexation process benefits only the City.
- Fear that the City wants to eliminate township government to facilitate the City's objectives.
- Township blocking of past annexations have lead to haphazard, parcel-by-parcel growth for the City. This growth is difficult to plan for and results in confusing municipal boundaries for our citizens and adds construction and O&M costs to the City to extend services to the properties.
- Years ago, residential subdivisions on the edge of town (such as Pekelville) were developed under the jurisdiction of the townships. Due to the lack of acceptable subdivision control standards and the inability or unwillingness of the townships to provide services to those areas, numerous problems arose. Even if the area were to be annexed, the City and its existing tax- and rate-payers must work toward and help finance the correction of these problems.
- In the past the City was viewed by the Townships as a governmental unit that wished to grow; this growth was often at the expense of annexing township land, resulting in a "win-lose" scenario for the units. The City's perspective was that it desires to grow so that the local economy does not stagnate, but that the growth should be planned and managed based on the principles of "Smart Growth."
- If the City were to provide services to the unincorporated areas surrounding Fremont, as it has done in the past, it would inevitably lead to more sprawl development in the townships with little or no tax base sharing with the City, which would be left to provide the necessary services.

The City representatives talked fervently about the need to assure the townships that the joint planning process could be worked out to benefit the entire Fremont Community – both the townships and the City. There was discussion on the need to develop a coordinated strategy for growth management in the Fremont Community with equal buy-in from all participating governmental units.

III. Discussion on how to work together in the Fremont Community to overcome Joint Planning obstacles.

Those present want to work with the participating townships to overcome some of the past obstacles in establishing joint planning efforts by doing the following:

- Recognizing the past concerns identified by both the townships and the City, addressing those that still need to be addressed and then focusing on the future of the greater Fremont Community.
- Acknowledging that the composition of the FAJPC and the creation of the joint planning agreement are not about who has the power, but about working together to create the kind of community in which we all want to live, work & recreate.
- It appears that the participating townships and the City all want to uphold the basic principles of Smart Growth; thus, an understanding of how to do that should be established. For example, if we all agree we want to promote infill development over “greenfield” development, our development decisions should be reflected in the agreement.
- Let’s develop a “Community” vision rather than having separate “City” & “Township” visions.
- The establishment of any FAJPC should consider whether a proposed development is compatible with the Fremont Area Joint Comprehensive Development and Growth Management Plan, which is to be updated in 2006.
- Board members and the community should be educated in terms of the benefits of joint planning.
- The proposed Commission should keep in mind the types of past joint efforts in planning, projects & services that have benefited the greater Fremont community, such as:
 - Preparing the Joint Fremont Area plans, including the above-noted Master Plan, Park & Recreation Plan, M-82 Corridor Study and the DDA Plan Amendments
 - Establishing the Fremont Area Joint Planning Committee
 - Establishing the Fremont Area City/Township Cooperation Committee
 - Planning & constructing the first two segments of the Town and County Path & other joint park/recreation projects
 - Negotiating a landmark Act 425 Conditional Property Transfer Agreement
 - Establishing the Fremont Area District Library
 - Developing the Joint Fremont Area Fire & Emergency Services Agreement
 - Cooperating on the “Building a Sense of Place” project
 - Cooperating to negotiate a common franchise agreement for cable television services.
- The proposed Commission should keep in mind the types of planning that *could* take place in the Greater Fremont Community as a result of joint planning, such as:
 - New environmental conservation design guidelines
 - Creation of Stormwater Management Improvement Program
 - Creation of a Recreation Authority

Those attending stressed that when communicating the benefits of joint planning to the public, we need to cite specific examples to which the public can relate, so that they understand the positive impacts of joint planning.

- It should also be stressed to the public and the governing boards that the following are benefits of joint planning:
 - Cost benefit of sharing professional consultants, staff, administrative costs, etc.
 - Cost savings as a result of the elimination of the duplication of services
 - It would be a more efficient and effective way to manage growth & help contain sprawl
 - Developers & property owners would have a uniform set of development goals & guidelines.

IV. Discussion on the City’s responses to the twelve (12) key questions concerning the development of a Joint Planning Agreement.

The attendees discussed the attached responses to the twelve key questions concerning the development of a Joint Planning Agreement.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business of the group, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.