

MEETING MINUTES
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) MEETING

Wednesday, November 30, 2005

7:30 – 9:00 AM

Fremont City Hall
Council Chambers

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 AM.

Members Present:	Lon Vredeveld	DDA Chair
	Kim Deur	Downtown Business Owner
	Ryan McNally	Downtown Attorney
	James M. Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Ron Vliem	Executive Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
	Rob Zeldenrust	Main Street Business Operator

Staff Present:	Todd Blake	Fremont City Clerk/Finance Director
	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Director
	Chris Yonker	Fremont City Manager

Members Absent:	Marianne Boerigter	Director, Newaygo County Council for the Arts
	Kevin Conley	Downtown Business Owner
	Lee Ann Glaser	Head - Fremont Retailers Association
	Kristie Van Simaey	Downtown Business Owner
	Ric Zahrt	Fremont Business Owner

Others Present:	Jerry Rich	Downtown Business Owner
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Consultants Present:	Harry Wierenga	Fleis & Vandenbrink
	Rick Stout	Fleis & Vandenbrink

II. Oath of Office

The Oath of Office was administered to Kim Deur by City Clerk Todd Blake.

III. Approval of Minutes

Rob Zeldenrust made a motion to approve the DDA minutes as presented from the September 28, 2005 meeting; the motion was seconded by Ron Vliem, and the motion carried.

IV. Update on DDA Site Visit

Lon Vredeveld reported that the DDA site visit to Rockford and Lowell scheduled for November 17, 2005 was cancelled due to inclement weather. The DDA indicated they want the visit to be rescheduled to January.

V. Meeting of the Fremont Restaurant Owners

Chair Vredeveld reported that he will facilitate a meeting of the Fremont Restaurant Owners on December 7, 2005 at 10:00 am at the Fremont City Hall. Ron Vliem indicated he wants the restaurant owners' participation in the March 24-25 Business Expo. Specifically, Mr. Vliem indicated he would like their involvement in another "Taste of Fremont" event during the Expo.

VI. Input from the Farmers Market Committee on the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan

Rob Zeldenrust indicated that the Fremont Farmers Market Committee met on Monday, November 28, 2005, and one of the main topics discussed was the building of a farmers' market pavilion downtown Fremont. He indicated that the "wish list" that was provided to Fleis & Vandenbrink was developed by the Farmers Market Committee with the input from the DDA and the farmers/vendors who participate in the current Fremont Farmers Market.

Mr. Zeldenrust indicated that the Farmers Market Committee is eager to move forward with the construction of a permanent pavilion for the market, which the Farmers Market Committee anticipates will incorporate the amenities outlined in the "wish list". He asked the DDA to make the construction of the pavilion a priority project within the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan. He indicated that the community is looking for something visual that they can attribute to the Fremont Blueprint Program, and he indicated the construction of the farmers' market pavilion would serve that function.

Mr. Zeldenrust indicated that money is always an issue. He went on to say that there are grant opportunities that can be pursued from various sources for the construction of the farmers market. He also indicated that as much as the Fremont Farmers Market Committee would like to begin their 2006 season in the new pavilion, he indicated that the Committee realized that it is unlikely. Mr. Zeldenrust indicated that Kay Cummings in the past has been responsible for the administration of the Fremont Farmers' Market, but in the coming year others on the Committee have agreed to assist Ms. Cummings by taking on part of the administrative responsibility.

VII. Update on the Fremont High School Project

Lon Vredeveld gave the DDA a quick overview of the process that was used to help determine which architectural style the Fremont community may want for its new high school. Chair Vredeveld indicated that a visual preference survey was conducted which showed architectural styles used in other communities and various architectural styles used in Fremont. Mr. Vredeveld said the group who viewed the visual preference survey indicated they liked the architectural style of the Fremont City Hall building best.

Mr. Vredeveld went on to say that there is no architectural design thus far for the high school project; they are still exploring the possibilities. It was discussed that the form of the high school will be significant to the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan. A comment was also made that the treatments (e.g., landscaping) that will be used in the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan could be extended to the high school. Another comment made was that the concurrence of both projects happening at the same time is good timing because the community can coordinate the design of the downtown with the new high school.

VIII. Discussion on the Downtown Fremont Enhancement Plan

Farmers Market Pavilion

Harry Wierenga led the discussion by indicating that at the last DDA meeting a number of sites were identified as being possibilities for the location of the Fremont Farmers Market pavilion and that neither Fleis & Vandenbrink nor the DDA appear to be married to one site. He indicated that there are pros and cons for each site.

Mr. Wierenga posed the question: "Is the farmers market driving the engineering?" Mr. Wierenga indicated if the market is to be located north of The Arts Place or anywhere on that block, there are grading, stormwater, and parking issues that need to be dealt with. He also said that these issues could be dealt with if the community felt that the synergy of having the market in that location was important. He indicated that it is not a foregone conclusion that the market will be located there,

but it is definitely a possibility. He indicated that other sites considered for the pavilion may be an easier fit in relation to the engineering considerations that must be addressed.

It was pointed out that if the farmers' market pavilion were to be located in the parking lot north of Fifth Third bank, it would create a street presence, especially due to its proximity to Main Street and Veterans Park. It was also pointed out that the users of the pavilion could use the park restroom facilities, which is a plus. However, the point was also made that the lot would have to be acquired by the City and that the lot north of the Arts Place is already owned by the City and would not have to be acquired. There would not be as many engineering issues related to this site as compared to the issues that need to be dealt with if the pavilion were located north of The Arts Place.

It was suggested that the City speak with the owners of Deur Speet to determine if the lot north and to the east of Fifth Third Bank, which is used to store vehicles, could be relocated.

It was pointed out that there may be a trade off. Would the Fremont community rather spend money to acquire property so that the pavilion can be constructed on one site or would it rather spend money on engineering issues so that the pavilion can be constructed on another site. The pros and cons of each site have to be carefully considered before a decision is made as to the location of the pavilion.

The DDA recognized that there are pros and cons to housing the farmers' market pavilion on various sites, but it appeared through discussion that the DDA felt the pavilion should on any site:

- Integrate with the historic downtown.
- Be functional (shelving to display goods; double loaded parking, etc.)
- Be a multi-use facility. (The more uses it has, the more likelihood of obtaining grants to fund it.)
- Relate to the space (e.g., parking lot) it occupies.
- Be aesthetically pleasing (beautiful design, use of banners, artwork, etc.)
- Be somewhere in size of about 150' x 175'.

Rick Stout showed the DDA a conceptual sketch of a farmers market pavilion that could be constructed; the sketch incorporated many of the ideas expressed, such as a pavilion having an historic feel to it, so it integrates with Fremont's historic downtown. Fleis & Vandenbrink stressed that the sketch is just a starting point to get feedback and that it may end up looking completely different. For instance, it could end up being a square shape if the space decided on for the market would lend itself better to a different shape pavilion.

Harry Wierenga asked the DDA to rank the following possible locations for the Fremont Farmers Market from 1 – 4 in terms of desirability of location:

1. Directly north of The Arts Place
2. Easterly most space in the same parking lot as The Arts Place (Across from City Hall)
3. Parking lot directly east of Veterans Park (North of Fifth Third Bank) (Acquisition of Property would be required)
4. In the middle of the block located between Sheridan and Maple and directly east of Division (Acquisition of property would be required.)

The top two choices tied for first place and were as follows:

1. Directly north of The Arts Place
2. Parking lot directly east of Veterans Park (North of Fifth Third Bank)

It was decided the Farmers Market Committee should be invited to the next DDA meeting and at that meeting discussions regarding the design and location of the farmers' market pavilion should continue.

Public Art

Harry Hierenga took a few minutes to ask about how the Fremont community felt about public art and what type of art the community would like included in any art placement program developed. Lon Vredevelde explained that any public art displayed in Fremont thus far has been developed in recognition of an event, such as the Veterans memorial in Veterans Park.

The DDA came up with the following suggestions regarding where art could be placed:

- Corners in rear parking lots
- Corners on the outside of buildings
- As murals on buildings
- As part of the signage and on the building for the farmers market pavilion
- Art could be placed in the landscape areas around the new high school.
- If traffic circles were created (e.g., corner of Stewart and Main), art could be placed within the landscape island.

It was decided that more discussion on the location and type of art to include in the art placement program would have to be discussed at a future meeting.

IX. Next Meeting

The next DDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 14, 2006 in the Council Chambers at the Fremont City Hall from 7:30 am – 9:00 am.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:57 AM.