

MEETING MINUTES
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) SUBCOMMITTEE

June 20, 2007
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
7 W. Main Street

MEETING OF THE MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE

Call to Order

The Marketing Subcommittee meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Chair Erber.

Marketing Subcommittee

Members Present:	Bonnie Erber	Community member (Chair)
	Jim Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Ron Vliem	Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
	Jeff Barnes	Community member
Members Absent:	Shari Paulsen	Community member
Guest Present:	Stephanie Zinn	Marketing Director, Gerber Memorial Health Services
Staff Present:	Michele Ribant	Neighborhood & Economic Development Director

Opening Remarks

Chair Erber welcomed Stephanie Zinn from Gerber Memorial Health Services (GMHS). She indicated that Ms. Zinn is a marketing professional at GMHS and is at the meeting today to provide ideas in terms of how and what we are doing at the City regarding our marketing efforts.

Update on the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Fremont Market Place Pavilion

Bonnie Erber reported that the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Fremont Market Place pavilion will be held on Thursday, July 26, 2007 at 4:30 p.m.

Selection of Banner Design for Downtown Parking Lots

Ms. Ribant showed the Subcommittee one of the red banners with yellow lettering that will be displayed in the NE Downtown parking lot near the new Market Place pavilion.

Update on Contracting with Branding Professionals

Ms. Ribant reported that the City received a grant from USDA Rural Development, \$10,000 of which can be used to hire a branding consultant who can assist the City's DDA in developing a brand or a theme for the City. It was suggested as part of the branding exercise, that City colors also be established. It was also suggested that the City colors be red and white, the same as the Fremont High School Packers. Jeffrey Barnes said there could be a contest at the high school to come up with a tagline for the City. The Subcommittee felt it was important to get buy-in from the public on the City's theme or tagline.

Michele Ribant indicated that we need to work together more regional to promote our area. She said if we promote County tourism, we all benefit.

Update on Consulting Services for Retailers

Ms. Ribant said that as part of the grant award from USDA Rural Development, \$20,000 of it is to be used to bring in a retail consultant to provide advice to business owners on how to merchandise and improve their businesses. Ms. Ribant said the consultant selected needs to revise his proposal to be in keeping with the \$20,000 price tag and that she will forward the contract to the Subcommittee for comment via e-mail.

Ways to Get the Word Out

Chair Erber stressed it is important that we promote what we are doing in Fremont in a variety of ways. She suggested using the Chamber newsletter as a vehicle. She said that one of the articles could include pictures of DDA members, so the community knows who to communicate with regarding DDA issues. Michele Ribant reported that due to the Erbers' suggestion, the City now has a monthly column in the *Times Indicator* that outlines what the City is working on.

Getting Downtown Business Owners Involved

Ron Vleim reported that there is no retailers association anymore. It was agreed that an informal meeting arrangement should be established where downtown business people can get together to discuss pertinent business matters. Ron Vliem indicated that the Chamber would set the first one up in August. It was suggested that the first one be held at the Chamber office. It was also suggested that future meetings rotate at local restaurants. The meetings would be free in that there would be no membership fee, etc., but it is anticipated that each person who attended the meeting would pay for his/her own meal or snack.

It was also suggested that we encourage business owners to keep their businesses open on Thursday evenings in Fremont.

Special Events

Bonne Erber indicated that it is important to get the community to come Downtown and enjoy all that Fremont has to offer. She went on to say that there are a number of special events already taking place in Fremont throughout the year, such as the National Baby Food Festival and the Fall Harvest Festival. The comment was made that the Fall Harvest Festival is growing every year. Michele Ribant indicated she would like to serve on the Fall Harvest Festival Committee this year, so she can integrate the Hike and Bike activity the City sponsors with the other Festival events.

The idea of having a holiday market at the new pavilion was suggested. Ron Vliem said the Christmas stroll was scheduled for December 8, 2007 and that perhaps the weekend of December 8, 2007 would be a good time to have the holiday market.

Jeff Barnes recommended getting the youth involved in community activities, and the Subcommittee whole-heartedly agreed.

Review of Marketing Recommendations from the Blueprint Revitalization Plan

Michele Ribant asked Stephanie Zinn to give her input on the proposed marketing actions the City is suppose to implement as part of the Blueprint Revitalization Plan for the City. Ms. Ribant indicated that the proposed actions in the Plan include:

1. Prepare and distribute lure brochure: Michele Ribant said that once we have an idea of how we plan to brand the City, we will be in a better position to create a lure brochure. Ms. Zinn agreed that we are not ready for a lure brochure yet.
2. Seek story placement: Ms. Erber indicated we must constantly try to get stories – not just articles about Fremont out in the newspapers. Ms. Zinn said people want to hear a story and that creating an interesting story about what we are trying to promote is important.

3. Consider placement of billboards: It was suggested that billboards are not only expensive, but they are also not a visually pleasing way to promote the City. The comment was made that billboards can be effective.

Stephanie Zinn said that overall the City was on the right track in terms of their marketing plans for the City.

Adjournment

There being no further business of the Subcommittee, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.