

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

**Wednesday, August 15, 2007
7:30 AM – 9:00 AM
Fremont City Hall
Council Chambers**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 a.m.

Members Present:	Lon Vredeveld	DDA Chair
	Marianne Boerigter	Executive Director, Newaygo County Council for the Arts
	Kim Deur	Downtown Property/Business Owner
	Rebecca Laing-Austin	Downtown Business Owner
	Lorna Kosztowny	Downtown Property Owner
	Gerry Rich	Downtown Business/Property Owner
	James M. Rynberg	Fremont Mayor
	Rob Zeldenrust	DDA District Business Manager
Members Absent:	Dusty Bitson	Downtown Business Owner
	Merle Ross	Downtown Business Owner
	Ron Vliem	Executive Director, Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce
Staff Present:	Chris Yonker	Fremont City Manager
	Michele Ribant	Fremont Neighborhood & Economic Development Director

Welcoming Remarks

Chair Vredeveld welcomed the DDA and indicated that the DDA has a new member, Merle Ross. Mr. Ross was unable to attend the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Lorna Kosztowny, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the minutes from the June 25, 2007 DDA meeting, as submitted, and to accept the following sets of minutes for information:

- Marketing Subcommittee (6-20-07)
- Public Art Subcommittee minutes (8-2-07)
- Streetscape/Signage Subcommittee minutes (7-25-07)
- Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee (6-18-07)
- Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee (8-8-07)

Update on Community Events

Chair Vredeveld indicated that it was good to see all the successful community events (e.g., Agricultural Fair, NCCA Arts Festival, Baby Food Festival, etc.) taking place in Fremont this summer. Michele Ribant informed the DDA that the Fremont Fall Harvest Festival is scheduled from Thursday, October 4, 2007 to Sunday, October 7, 2007. She said the City is going to coordinate the 2nd Annual Fall Harvest Festival Hike N' Bike on Saturday, October 6, 2007. The City wants to promote healthy lifestyles.

Update on the Downtown Market Pavilion Project

Members of the DDA shared their thoughts on the new Fremont Market Place pavilion. There were a lot of positive comments, but there were also some issues, such as the sharing of the parking lot that needed to be worked out. It was expressed that all community members should be encouraged to use the pavilion for a myriad of purposes.

Update on the Proposed New Form-based Zoning Ordinance

Chair Vredevelde indicated that on Tuesday, August 21, 2007, there are a series of meetings, as outlined in one of the agenda exhibits, during the day and evening that one can go to in order to learn more about the new Fremont Form-based Zoning Ordinance. He said the public hearing for the new ordinance would take place on Tuesday, August 28, 2007. He then went on to give a brief explanation of form-based zoning; he explained that the focus of the new ordinance is on creating community design that is pleasing in form rather than focusing on segregation of uses.

Update on DDA Subcommittee Work

Marketing Subcommittee

Chair Vredevelde informed the DDA that in their agenda packets was a proposal from The Peppertree Consulting Group and MCrosson Associates, Inc. outlining the retail workshops and consulting services they can provide the merchants in Fremont. He said that the \$20,000 for the consulting services is being paid for via grant funding by the USDA Rural Development. Michele Ribant indicated that there is time allotted by the consultants for one-on-one consultations with the merchants, but there are only 13 appointment times. She suggested that if more than 13 merchants express an interest in booking a consultation session, then names should be picked from a hat. It was the consensus of the DDA that everyone that expresses an interest should be accommodated in some way, either by limiting the time of each session or by having merchants with like businesses meet with the consultants at the same time.

A motion was made by Marianne Boerigter, seconded by Lorna Kosztowny and carried to recommend to the Fremont City Council approval of the Retail Consulting proposal provided by The Peppertree Consulting Group and MCrosson Associates, Inc. for retail consulting services in the amount of \$20,000.

Chair Vredevelde indicated that the agenda packets contained a RFP for a marketing/branding consultant, and he asked if anyone had any changes to the RFP before it is sent. No changes were suggested. Michele Ribant indicated that she was going to send it to Fleis & Vandenbrink and Hooker DeJong. She asked whether anyone had suggestions on whom to send it to. Marianne Boerigter suggested Patty Janes from Central Michigan University, and Lon Vredevelde suggested sending it to The Peppertree Consulting Group. Gerry Rich thought we should send it to at least one marketing firm.

A motion was made by Rob Zeldenrust, seconded by Kim Deur and carried to approve the Request for Proposal for a Marketing/Branding Consultant.

Public Art Subcommittee

The chair of the Public Art Subcommittee, Marianne Boerigter, reported that a lot of exciting things are happening in terms of public art in Fremont. She informed the DDA that Renae Wallace, a local artist, is in the midst of painting a mural on the rear of the AT&T building downtown Fremont and that it should be completed by the end of August. She said that Ms. Wallace will paint a mural to be mounted on boards for the front of the AT&T building and that

the project should be completed by the beginning of October in time for the Fremont Fall Harvest Festival.

Ms. Boerigter informed the DDA that Deb Emerick, a local artist, has been selected by the DDA Public Art Subcommittee to create a mosaic for the south wall of the restroom facility located west of the Fremont Market Place. She said that the Fremont Rotary Club was sponsoring the public art project.

Ms. Boerigter went on to say that the Fremont Area Community Foundation is funding \$13,700 towards the cost of the public art sculpture designed by Cara O'Brien, a local artist, for the front of the Post Office site. She indicated that approximately \$4,000 more is needed to fund the site improvements.

Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee

Marianne Boerigter, the chair of the Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee, outlined that there were three new applications for the Fremont Façade Improvement Grant Program as follows:

1. Catalin Iordache (Guiseppe's Restaurant) 19 W. Main Street
 - o Front: \$8,500.00
 - o Rear: \$1,748.50
 - o Lower Side: \$1,142.50

2. Lorna Kosztowny 33 E. Main Street
 - o Front: \$3,942.50
 - o Rear: \$1,915.00

3. Kim Deur (Koffee Kuppe) 46 W. Main Street
 - o Front: \$700.00

Ms. Boerigter indicated that the DDA is being asked to vote on the amount of the grant request as well as the design of the façade improvement. Becky Laing-Austin indicated that if the DDA was being asked to approve the façade designs, the proposed design/renovations should be outlined to the DDA. Ms. Boerigter acknowledged that the DDA should be given an overview of the proposed work that is to be performed on the facades. Gerry Rich indicated that he worked with each of the façade program applicants on their façade proposals; therefore, he outlined to the DDA the work to be performed on each of the aforementioned facades.

Gerry Rich recused himself from the vote since he is the contractor who worked with each applicant. The following motions were made:

19 W. Main Street

A motion was made by Becky Laing-Austin, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the facade improvement program grant funding request for 19 W. Main Street in the amount of \$11,391.00 broken down as follows:

Front Façade: \$8,500.00
Rear Façade: \$1,748.50
Side Façade: \$1,142.50

and to approve the design as outlined in the specifications provided by Rich Construction dated July 31, 2007 with the additional requirement that a snap in grid be provided for the large front façade upper window to create the appearance of window panes as depicted in the design by Hooker DeJong.

33 E. Main Street

A motion was made by Rob Zeldenrust, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the façade improvement program funding request for the front and rear facades of the building located at 33 E. Main Street in the amount of \$5,857.50 broken down as follows:

Front Façade: \$3,942.50

Rear Façade: \$1,915.00

and the DDA also approved the design with the proviso that the Façade/Historic Preservation Subcommittee chair approve any material that is to be used on the front façade if brick is not to be used.

46 West Main Street

A motion was made by Lorna Kosztowny, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to approve the façade improvement grant program funding request for 46 W. Main Street in the amount of \$700.00 for gooseneck lights on the front facade, and the DDA also approved the color of the gooseneck lighting fixtures.

Update on the Museum Project

Chair Vredevelde reported that the DDA contributed financially toward the Museum Economic Feasibility study that was performed to determine whether Fremont could financially support a local history museum; and therefore, he wanted to provide them with feedback as to the outcome of the study. He indicated that the study concluded that if there was enough will within the community, there were ways in which a museum could be established. He indicated that the group that was spearheading this project concluded not to move forward with the project. Mayor Rynberg said that there was not enough serious support within the community and that one of the major issues that was hard to overcome was the long-term sustainability of the museum.

Discussion on the Proposed DDA Millage

Chair Vredevelde indicated that the Fremont City Council and the DDA approved the 2007/2008 DDA budget in June. He indicated that also in June the City Council voted to approve a DDA millage, but in order to levy the tax, the DDA also needed to approve the millage. He went on to say that the DDA millage was being proposed to cover half of the cost (\$31,000 out of \$62,000) of the DDA District Maintenance. He said that in June the DDA was informed that the proposed DDA millage would be 0.15 mills, but as it turns out, the millage rate would have to be 0.50 mills to cover the cost of the DDA maintenance (\$31,000) it was intended to cover.

Michele Ribant handed out an updated DDA Tax Capture and Millage Report that outlined how each property owner in the DDA District would be impacted financially if the millage were levied. It was expressed that the millage was being proposed at a bad time because there are many businesses that have endured some hard times due to the impact that the market structure construction project had on their business. It was also expressed that there was no conversation of how any improvements the DDA would make would be funded when the market pavilion project was originally proposed. It was suggested that

in the future whenever the DDA is involved in any improvement project that how the maintenance for the project will be funded should be a part of the initial conversation. It was suggested that the DDA look at its goals for the next three to five years. The point was made that the City needs to include the DDA in a more integrated way in the future in terms of planning and budgeting.

Chair Vredevelde indicated that the DDA can either set a hearing and then after the hearing vote to approve a DDA millage at a rate of 0.50 to cover \$31,000 of the DDA Maintenance expense, or it can look within the approved DDA 2007/2008 budget to determine if it can be amended to cover the expense.

It was pointed out that the 2007/2008 budget for the DDA District Maintenance is as follows:

\$16,000 – TIF Capture
\$15,000 – Beautification Fund
\$31,000 – DDA Millage

Total: \$62,000

After some discussion, a motion was made by Gerry Rich, seconded by Marianne Boerigter and carried to propose to the Fremont City Council amending the DDA 2007/2008 budget so that the funding for the DDA District Maintenance would come from the following sources:

\$16,000 – TIF Capture
\$33,000 – Beautification Fund
\$4,000 – Administration fee not used for the Fremont Rental Rehab Program (General Fund)
\$5,000 – New and replacement parkway trees along Main Street (Unspent from 2006/2007 – Beautification Fund)
\$4,000 – Artwork start-up costs (TIF Capture)

Total: \$62,000

A motion was made by Marianne Boerigter, seconded by Lorna Kosztowny and defeated to set a date for a public hearing of Thursday, September 6, 2007 at 8:30 a.m. in the Council Chambers at the Fremont City Hall to consider the proposed DDA millage.

Next DDA Meeting

Thursday, September 6, 2007
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Fremont City Hall
Council Chambers

Adjournment

There being no further business of the DDA, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.