

**FREMONT AREA JOINT PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, November 14, 2005
5:00 – 6:30 PM
Sheridan Township Hall**

Members Present:	Dayton Township:	Chuck Witteveen, Planning Commissioner
	Dayton Township:	Shirley Hooker, Township Supervisor
	Dayton Township:	Barbara Popp, Board Member
	Dayton/Sheridan Townships:	Peter Lance, Zoning Administrator
	Sheridan Charter Township:	Dave Lue, Supervisor
	Sheridan Charter Township:	Don Potter, Board Member
	Sheridan Charter Township:	Jack Taylor, Planning Commissioner
	Sheridan Charter Township:	Jeff Wharton, Planning Commissioner
	Sherman Township:	Joan Obits, Supervisor
	Sherman Township:	Fran Derks, Board Member
	Sherman Township:	Dean Van Ostenberg, Planning Commissioner
	Sherman Township:	Randy Paulson, Planning Commissioner
	Sherman Township:	Roman Miller, Zoning Administrator
	City of Fremont:	Jim Breinling, Councilmember
City of Fremont:	Richard Rought, Zoning Administrator	
Alternates Not Present:	Sheridan Township:	Sandy Vandenberg, Planning Commissioner
	Sheridan Township:	Jennifer Christenson, Board Member
Members Absent:	Dayton Township:	Vern Staley, Planning Commissioner
	City of Fremont:	Robert Goscicki, Planning Commissioner
	City of Fremont:	Chuck Whitman, Planning Commissioner
	City of Fremont:	Jim Rynberg, Mayor
Other Officials Present:	Chris Yonker	Fremont City Manager
	Michele Ribant	City Director of Neighborhood & Economic Development
Consultants Present:	Joe VanderMeulen	Executive Director, Land Information Access Association
	Harry A. Burkholder	Community Planner, Land Information Access Assoc.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Witteveen called the meeting to order at 5:03 PM.

II. Greetings & Introductions

Joe VanderMeulen greeted the Committee and introduced Harry Burkholder, Community Planner for the Land Information Access Association.

III. Review & Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the minutes from the September 12, 2005 Fremont Area Joint Planning Committee meeting.

IV. Review Discussions regarding Joint Planning Efforts with Jurisdictions (Opportunities and Concerns)

Mr. VanderMeulen reported that during October & early November he had attended the planning commission meetings of Dayton, Sherman and Sheridan Townships and the City of Fremont to learn of their concerns, if any, regarding the development of a joint planning agreement. These were joint meetings that included the respective Township Board members and City Councilmembers. The public was also invited to the meetings.

Mr. VanderMeulen indicated that the commissioners and board/councilmembers for Dayton and Sheridan Townships and the City did not have a lot to say at the meetings. He also noted that these governmental units had worked together before in creating the Fremont Area Joint Comprehensive Development and Growth Management Plan; therefore, they appeared more comfortable with the joint planning efforts. He felt that Sherman Township was a new participant in the joint planning process and that it may take time for them to become comfortable with the efforts.

Mr. VanderMeulen stated that through the interaction he has had at various meetings and through conversations he has had with several individuals, the following concerns were expressed in terms of matters that need to be addressed through the joint planning process:

- The general public does not have a good understanding of the value of joint planning. The Committee needs to educate the community.
- The Townships are generally concerned that the City wants to extend its boundaries and impose additional growth on the Townships.
- There is a concern on how the procedural process will work when it comes time to obtain approvals (e.g., amended Joint Comprehensive Development and Growth Management Plan.)
- There is a general concern over equitable sharing of power.
- There is a concern that local governmental units will lose autonomy.

The Committee generally discussed trust issues; in particular, what has caused the Townships to mistrust the City and vice-a-versa. An opinion was expressed that the Townships mistrusted the City because they felt that in the past annexations were forced upon the Townships. It was also expressed that during the period of time the annexations were taking place, there was a lack of knowledge on the part of the Townships as to why and how the process would work. Dave Lue suggested that the City provide the Committee with past position papers developed by the City/Township Cooperation Committee with regard to boundary adjustment so that the Committee could better understand past issues.

Joe VanderMeulen asked the Committee whether anyone thought working toward a joint planning agreement were a bad idea; no one indicated that it was. Chris Yonker observed that all four participating governmental units appear to be striving for the same thing: to promote the principles of Smart Growth.

V. Review Municipal/Township Planning Act Comparison (Powers and Duties)

Harry Burkholder provided the Committee with a comparison chart that delineates the difference in certain areas (e.g., procedures for adopting a comprehensive plan) between the Municipal Planning Act and the Township Planning Act. He reviewed the chart with the Committee.

VI. Discussion on Joint Planning Commission Specifications

Joe VanderMeulen felt that the Committee needed to work through some issues in order to create the joint planning agreement. He suggested that one of the long-term or intermediate goals of any newly formed Commission could be to develop similar zoning districts or to adopt the same zoning code within each participating governmental unit. He then posed the following questions to the group:

- Should each participating governmental unit be equal partners on any joint planning commission that is established?
- What would be the approval procedure for establishing the proposed joint planning commission? It was suggested that there be a working session on how the process would work.
- What would be the geographical jurisdiction of the joint planning commission?

Harry Burkholder provided the Committee with the following Fremont Area maps to help members decide how they would like to determine which area to include under the joint planning commission's jurisdiction:

- Prime Farmland
- Population Density
- 1998 Land Use
- School District Boundaries

- Existing & Planned Utility Service Areas
- Major Watersheds
- Composite Zoning

After much discussion on the aforementioned issues, it became apparent that each governmental unit needed to focus on answering several key questions in order for the Committee to work together to create a joint planning agreement and subsequent joint planning ordinances.

VII. Plan for Next Meeting

Each governmental unit was asked to meet independent of one another before the next Fremont Area Joint Planning Committee meeting, which will be held on Monday, December 12, 2005 from 5:00 - 6:30 PM at the Dayton Township Hall. At their independent meeting, each governmental unit is to answer the twelve questions outlined on the LIAA handout entitled “Developing an Agreement/Ordinance for Joint Planning.” Each unit should supply its answers to the questions posed in the handout in electronic format (if possible) to Michele Ribant at mribant@cityoffremont.net by December 2, 2005. Ms. Ribant, in turn will provide the feedback to LIAA by December 5, 2005.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business of the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 PM.