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TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Kimani Jeffrey, Staff

RE: Request of the Roxbury Group, LLC to amend Article XVII, District Map 4, of the 1984 Detroit City Code Chapter 61, Zoning, by modifying the provisions of the existing PD-H (Planned Development District-Historic) zoning classification for the property located in the 3400 Woodward Avenue block generally bounded by Eliot Street and the vacated portion of Eliot Street, John R. Street, Erskine Street and Woodward Avenue to establish the development known as the West Elm Hotel Detroit. The request proposes to allow for a twelve (12) story hotel tower and a two (2) story glass conservatory (**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**).

DATE: May 9, 2019

BACKGROUND

On April 11, 2019, the City Planning Commission held the public hearing for the above captioned request of the Roxbury Group for the PD modification of land located in the 3400 Woodward Avenue block.

The Roxbury Group is proposing to erect the West Elm Hotel in the Brush Park Historic District. The hotel would be complemented by a proposed new conservatory on the south side of the hotel between it and the ¹Bonstelle Theatre. The hotel is proposed to be twelve (12) stories including 154 guest rooms and also have dining and lounge spaces on the first floor.

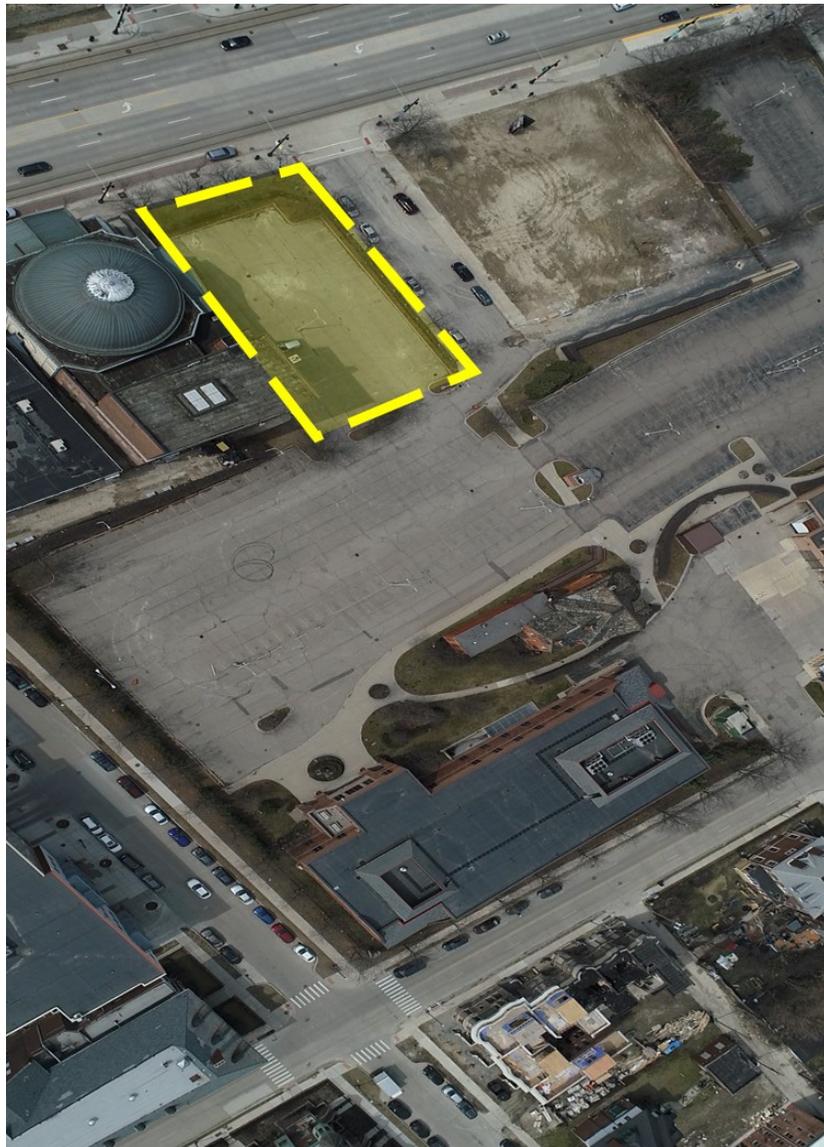
Additionally, the hotel plans to accommodate meeting and exercise spaces, a restaurant and bar, conference center, and a fitness center. The Conservatory is planned to be two (2) stories abutting the Bonstelle Theater and will to support the hotel. It'll also serve as a gathering space for attendees of the Bonstelle Theater.

PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

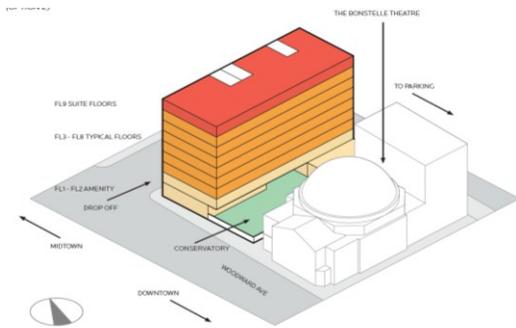
At the CPC public hearing, a representative from Midtown Detroit Inc. spoke in favor of the proposed West Elm Hotel. At least one person spoke with concerns related to parking for the

¹ The Bonstelle Theatre, originally known as Temple Beth-El at its inception in 1902 is owned and operated by Wayne State University. The building is on the National Register of Historic Places and is the work of renowned architect Albert Kahn. The Theater originally hosted a Jewish congregation led by Rabbi Leo M. Franklin. The theaters architecture is influenced by Roman and Greek temples such as the Pantheon in Rome. Italy. The structure was eventually sold to Jessie Bonstelle, hence the renaming, and converted to a theater in the 1920's.

hotel. As stated in staff's previous report, the Brush Park CDC submitted a letter supporting the project.



Project Site



Project site schematic diagram and rendering.

²The project requires 116 parking stalls for the hotel which are planned to be housed within the proposed SOMA parking deck if approved and once completed. Until this is completed, or if it were not to be completed for any reason, the developer would utilize the existing surface parking on the adjacent lot which is controlled by the same interest that owns the entire Red Cross site.

ANALYSIS

This project is generally in conformance with the PD District design criteria of **Sec. 61-11-15** of the Zoning Ordinance. Some of the criteria that are considered as a part of the process are as outlined:

***Master Plan.** The proposed development should reflect applicable policies stated in the Detroit Master Plan. The policies relating to the geographic area in question as well as general policies will be considered. This zoning ordinance requires that the proposed major land use be consistent with the adopted Master Plan in all PD developments.*

The Planning and Development Department has submitted a letter stating that the proposed development does conform to the Future General Land Use of the Master Plan of Policies. The subject site is located within the Lower Woodward area of Neighborhood Cluster 4 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies. The Future Land Use map for this area shows Mixed Residential Commercial (MRC) for the subject property.

***Scale, form, massing, and density.** Scale, form, massing and density should be appropriate to the nature of the project and relate well to surrounding development and **Compatibility** the proposed development should be compatible with surrounding development in terms of land use, general appearance and function, and should not adversely affect the value of properties in the immediate vicinity.*

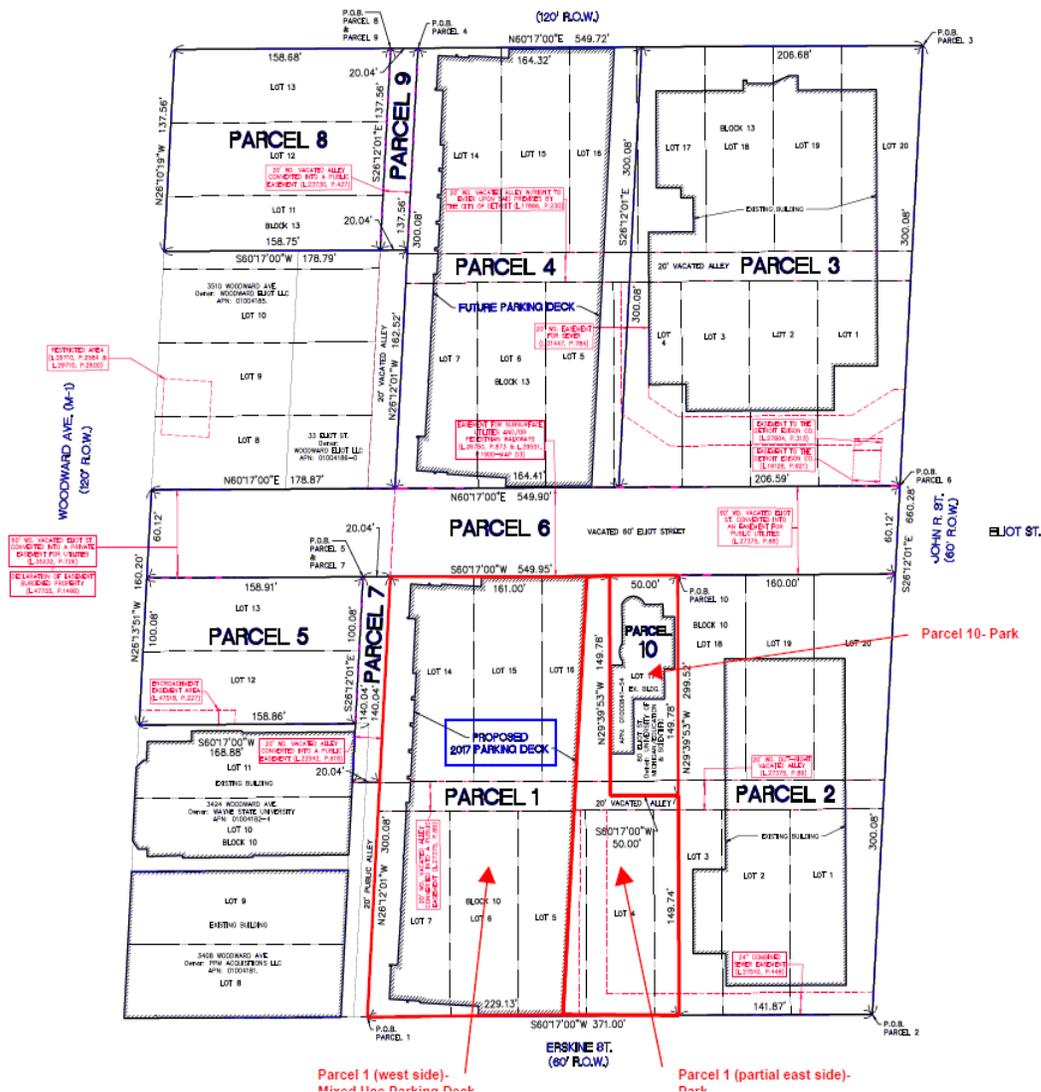
The scale, form, massing and density proposed for this development are appropriate for a site of this nature. The proposed hotel would abut a Major Street and Mass Transit Route consistent with the provisions of Neighborhood Cluster 4 of the Master Plan of Policies. The MP indicates that Woodward is the spine of the City and serves as an appropriate thoroughfare for dense development, especially, of the sort within the greater downtown area. Recent studies have shown that there is a rising need for hotel space in the City of Detroit. This hotel, will help to fill some of the void that currently exists for space.

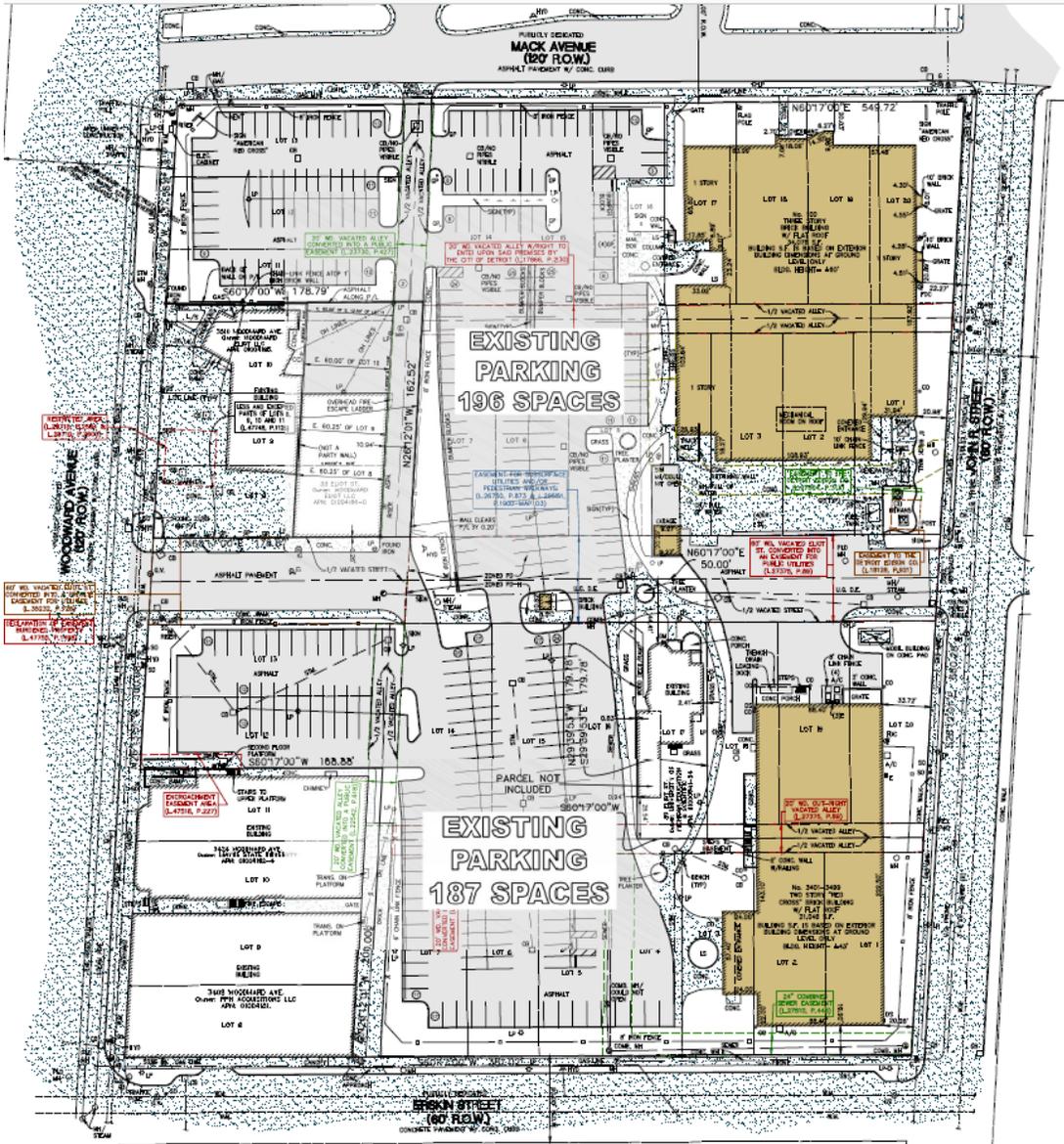
The scale, form density and massing are appropriate. The proposed conservancy serves as an accessory use, and in staff's opinion this is a creative way to establish a street wall at pedestrian level and utilize space that might otherwise be dead-space. The conservancy also serves to connect the Bonstelle Theatre and West Elm Hotel, to make sure that the theatre remains in use for years to come. This development is compatible with the surrounding built environment.

***Parking and loading.** Where appropriate, adequate vehicular off-street parking and loading should be provided. The City Planning Commission will be guided by standards delineated in this zoning ordinance with adjustments appropriate to each specific situation.*

² The Zoning Ordinance requires three (3) spaces per four (4) guestrooms and can be housed within 100 feet of the principal hotel use.

The parking for the site is planned to be located in the proposed SOMA parking deck that will hold approximately 600 vehicles. Since the parcel for the proposed SOMA parking deck is within 100 feet of the subject hotel property (SOMA site identified as parcel one on the map below), it is allowable to be considered accessory parking for the hotel per the zoning ordinance. Access from the hotel to the parking deck would be provided interior to the developments and off-street to the rear of the buildings. If the SOMA parking structure did not come to fruition for any reason, the West Elm Hotel has a secondary plan to house parking for the use on the existing parking lots that exist on the Red Cross site. At the northern portion of the Red Cross site, there are 196 spaces and at the southern portion of the site, there are approximately 187 parking spaces (see map). All of this parking is under the control of the same owner who has worked out the deal for the West Elm Hotel.





Environmental impacts. Environmental impacts that relate to such factors as noise, air, combustibles and explosives, gases, soil, and water pollution, toxic waste, vibration, odor, glare, and radiation, should be controlled to be within acceptable levels at all times.

There are no foreseeable negative environmental impacts that will be caused by the proposed development.

Preservation and restoration. Preservation and restoration of buildings having architectural or historic value should be considered a primary objective.

This project is aiding in the preservation and restoration of the Bonstelle Theatre as the theatre will support the goals of the hotel. Rehabilitation work is going into the theatre as a part of this effort and might not otherwise be accomplished if not for the investment of the hotel.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing review outlined in this report, CPC staff recommends approval of the proposal of the Roxbury Group with the following conditions:

1. That the developer work with the immediately adjacent community to minimize disruption to the neighborhood during construction and address impacts that may arise; and
2. That final site plans, elevations, lighting, landscape and signage plans be submitted by the developer to the staff of the City Planning Commission for review and approval prior to submitting applications for applicable permits.

cc: Maurice Cox, Director, PDD
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