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February 28, 2020

HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

RE: Special district review of the request of the Buildings, for proposed alterations to the former site of Ford Auditorium (RECOMMENDING CONDITIONAL APPROAVL)

NATURE OF REQUEST

The City Planning Commission has received application and Your Honorable Body has been petitioned for Special District Review and approval of proposed alteration to the site of the demolished Ford Auditorium on East Jefferson Ave. Imagination Detroit, on behalf of Ford Motor Company, is requesting authorization to make improvements to enable the site to be used for the staging events and exhibitions, essentially expanding activities at Hart Plaza. Currently, the site is used for surface parking and event related storage without benefit of improvement since the former venue was demolished. The site also sits above the two level Ford Underground Garage.

These proposed improvements are being pursued by the petitioner in lieu of a user fee. They will not only benefit Ford Motor Company's planned exhibition during the North American International Auto Show, but any other users of the site following completion of construction. These improvements will provide a better appearance and greater utilization of the site until greater renovation and redevelopment occur here and at Hart Plaza.

The property is zoned PC (Public Center) and as such Your approval is required after receiving report and recommendation from the Planning and Development Department and the City Planning Commission.

PROPOSAL REVIEW

The upper level of the site meets the grade of E. Jefferson Ave. and extends southward about 300 feet to an irregular edge line. This portion of the site contains the vestiges of the approach and drop-off for the old venue as well as a landscaped area along Bates Street where a few mature trees also remain. These existing features are to be demolished and replaced with a rectangular asphalt paved pad that can support parking and events. The pad will also include drainage and will be bordered by a concrete walking path and landscaped areas. Vehicular access will be retained along E. Jefferson. These improvements are depicted in attached site plan.

A secondary sidewalk currently runs parallel to and about 58 feet south of the primary sidewalk along E. Jefferson Ave. connecting to Hart Plaza. The demolition and repaving will eliminate the distinguishing characteristics of the side walk, but pedestrian movement along that path is to be

retained. The retaining wall at the western edge of this area will remain, defining the shared border with Hart Plaza.

The remainder of the site drops about 20 feet below the grade of the upper level and extends southward another 300 feet or so to Atwater Street. The remaining vestiges of the auditorium will be demolished and the site regraded adding an 18 bed of compacted crushed concrete. Drainage will also be added to this portion of the site, truly making it serviceable for events. Repairs and improvements will also be made to the maintenance and emergency access road that runs along the western edge of the site abutting Hart Plaza.

CONCLUSION AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Development Department and City Planning Commission staff are finalizing our review and discussions with the petitioner. The proposed alterations will provide an improved finished grade to support events on site and at Hart Plaza while also providing better accommodation for parking when events are not being staged. This improved condition will also increase the value and utility of the site until such time that more significant renovation of the subject property and Hart Plaza can be realized.

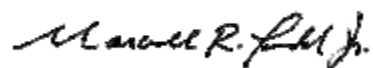
As noted above, the pavement comprising the secondary sidewalk which runs south of and parallel to E. Jefferson will be lost to the demolition and the area is to be repaved with asphalt. Since pedestrian movement is intended to continue along that path, it might benefit from some pavement marking to communicate that intention to motorized and non-motorized users.

The plans as submitted don't convey any detail as to how the landscaped areas will be treated. Given that a number of mature trees are to be removed from the site, PDD and CPC suggest that some tree planting should be included in the landscaped area along Bates Street and possibly East Jefferson where the subsurface structure will permit.

Consistent with the above review and findings CPC staff recommends approval of the requested alterations to the former site of the Ford Auditorium with the following conditions:

1. That in order to provide additional safety and convenience, pavement markings be added to the asphalt paving of the upper level to denote the path of the east/west secondary sidewalk south of E. Jefferson Ave. where it traverses the site;
2. That if the underlying structure will allow trees and shrubs to be placed in the area denoted for landscaping on the site plan, landscape of a type, species and spacing interval to be determined in conjunction with GSD, PDD and CPC, and
3. That final site plans, elevations, landscaping, lighting and signage plans be submitted to CPC staff prior to application being made for applicable permits, for review and approval for consistency with this approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcell R. Todd, Jr. Director
Jamie Murphy, City Planner

Attachments



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No.	Date	Amendment	Initials

DESIGN INTENT ONLY

1116

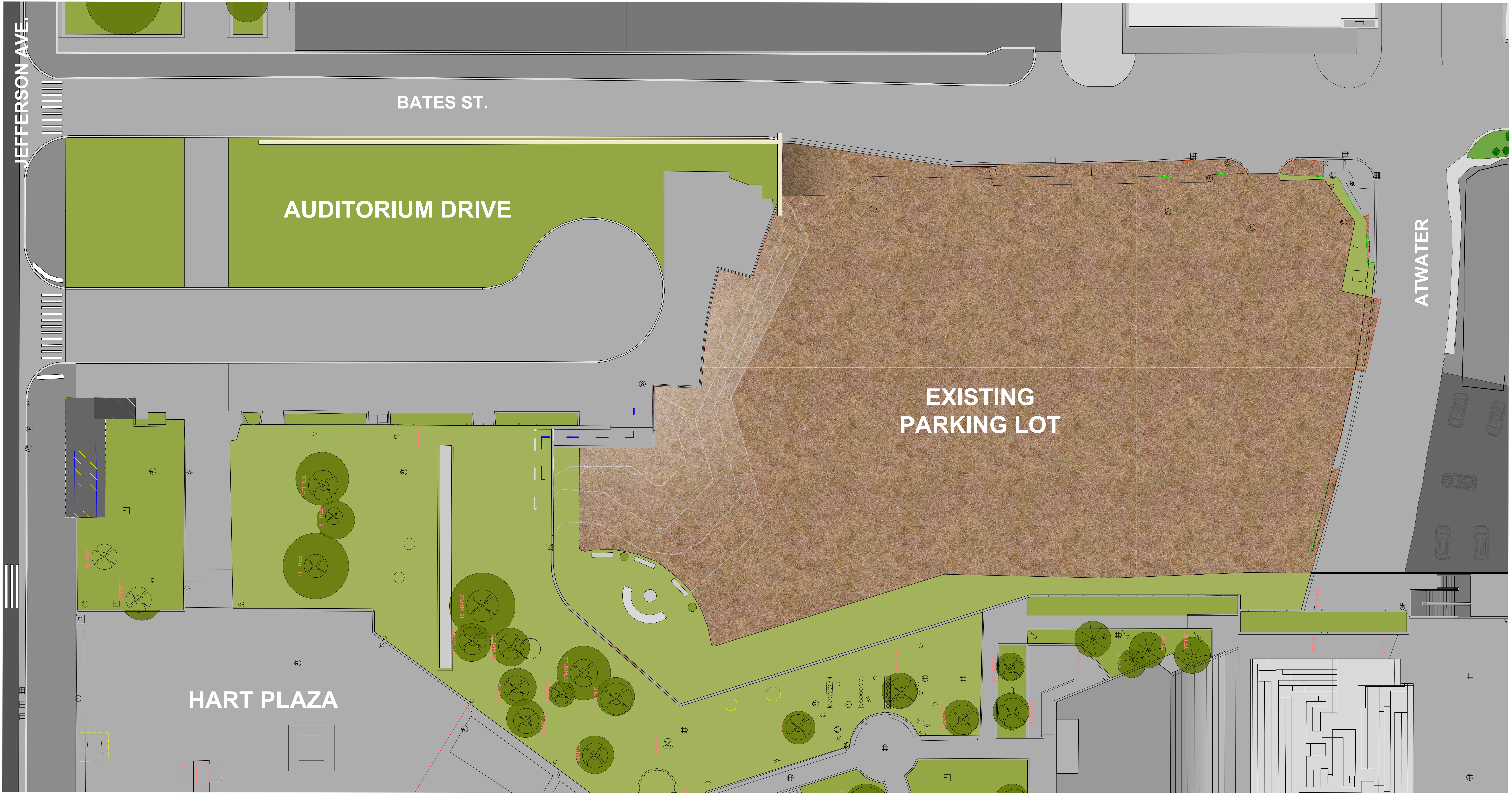
Client
 Project **NAIAS 2020**

Project Date **JUNE 2020**
 Venue **20 EAST JEFFERSON**
 Job No **####**
 Subject **HART PLAZA POST-SHOW**

Date **02.2020**
 Design **IMAGINATION**
 Drawn By **VP**
 Drawing No. **1116**
 Scale **1:200 @ ARCH E**

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DESIGN INTENT ONLY

1115

Client: **NAIAS 2020**

Project: **NAIAS 2020**

Project Date: **JUNE 2020**

Venue: **20 EAST JEFFERSON**

Job No: **####**

Subject: **HART PLAZA AS IS**

Date: **02.2020**

Design: **IMAGINATION**

Drawn By: **VP**

Drawing No: **1115**

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