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Gwendolyn Lewis, MBA
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.
Rachel M. Udabe

City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES
June 5, 2025
5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:28 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett, Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza, Ritchie Harrison (arrived 5:30pm), Gwen Lewis, Donovan Smith, and Rachel Udabe (arrived 6:50pm)

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion Approved.

II. Meeting minutes

Meeting minutes of January 30, 2025.

Commissioner Bennett moved to approve the Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Esparza. Motion Approved.

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – To consider the request of Wallick Development, LLC, to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-49, District Map No. 47 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show an SD1 (Special Development District, Small-Scale, Mixed-Use) zoning classification where an R2 (Two-Family Residential District) zoning classification is shown at 4094 Duane Street. The proposed rezoning area is the block bounded by Richton Street on the north side, Petoskey Avenue on the west side, Duane Street on the south side, and Holmur Street on the east side. **(EF)** **45 min**

Present: Graham Welling and Brennon Davis, Wallick Development
Eric Fazzini, CPC Staff

Eric Fazzini presented via PowerPoint the request to rezone 4094 Duane Street, a vacant site, from R2 to SD1 to allow the construction and development of multiple family dwelling units. The site is located in District 7, Nardin Park area, west of the Dexter Avenue Corridor and south of West Davison. Mr. Fazzini displayed photos, aerial views, site plans, zoning maps and described the zoning of the surrounding area. He mentioned the site is the former location of the Alice Birney Elementary School which operated from 1964-2009, and was demolished in 2016. Mr. Fazzini stated, "The parcel is currently owned by the City of Detroit, and the Housing Revitalization Department (HRD) selected a request for proposal (RFP) response from development team for the acquisition for the property and development of multiple family housing." He described the project will consist of three types of multi-family buildings including a senior housing building (renderings displayed). There will be 13 one-bedroom units, 28 two-bedroom units, and 12 three-bedroom units, clubhouse, playground and other standard site features (renderings displayed). He explained that the development team made modifications to their site plan after community engagement. The Planning and Development Department (PDD) stated that the proposal is generally consistent with the Master Plan.

Graham Welling of Wallick Development explained the project details and described their community engagement as follows: March 4 Preliminary Plan Review (PPR) meeting with City departments; April 2-presented to Russell Woods Neighborhood Association; April 30-participated in a District 7 online event; and May 8-meeting with Richton Street Survivors Block Club. Mr. Welling mentioned that after community feedback, the development team decided to modify its plans for the driveway layout. There will be no vehicle access off of Richton Street. He described the senior building as an elevator service building for individuals that are age 55 and over eligible for independent living. He mentioned their eagerness to provide a commercial space in conformity with HRD's request for a commercial space to serve the community there. The multiple family dwelling units will have affordable rent in compliance with the Area Median Income (AMI) of 30%-80%. It is estimated that rent may range from \$500-\$1500 depending on unit size and AMI. He expressed that SD1 is most applicable in range of uses with the best parking standards for their project. He displayed photos of the conceptual contemporary styles for the exterior and interior layout of the buildings. He explained the timeline for financial business in the fall-winter 2025, and a goal of the project to be completed late 2027-early 2028.

Michelle Lee of HRD discussed that there is an executed development agreement between the development team and HRD pertaining to the site at 4094 Duane. She explained that HRD monitors and remains involved in the project from RFP through post-closing. Ms. Lee emphasized that HRD requests that a commercial space is included in this development for 1000 square feet or less. The community-based commercial space may be an entrepreneurial occupant or service agency, but a commercial establishment viable for the Russell Woods and Nardin Park community. This statement was in response to Commissioner Lewis' question.

Mr. Welling responded that the project's subcontractors will be locally based, and the developers are required to abide by certain standards as a condition of the financial resource's requirements. They will be making effort to hire Detroit based businesses. This statement was in response to Commissioner Daniels' question.

Public Testimony

Keshia commented that she is the President of Richton Street Survivors Block Club. She expressed gratitude to the Wallick development team for changing the initial building and driveway access plans. She mentioned that some community members are in support, and some are against. She expressed gratitude for the development.

IV. Public Comment –

Mr. Twinew commented about the request from Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) to build a Freud pump station. He stated his concerns pertaining to GLWA's bad behavior, property purchases, community engagement, drawings, building permits, operations of the upstream flow, and environmental impact.

Ms. Cartwright surrendered her commenting time.

Jay Juergensen commented on land use and planning regarding GLWA's pump station project. He mentioned his concerns on it being an industrial project, M zoning, R5 zoning, PD zoning and illegal spot zoning. He mentioned his concern for legal action and court. He concluded his comment asking CPC not approve the project.

Commissioner Smith verbally acknowledged that CPC is in receipt of Jay Juergensen's informational distributed handout.

AJ King commented on the Jefferson/Chalmers area, and his community garden (Essex Corridor). He discussed concerns that the GLWA project will cause more disconnect and impact the character of the neighborhood. He encouraged CPC to oppose the GLWA project and mentioned opportunity costs.

Deputy Director Gulock responded that the GLWA project will be on the June 26, 2025 CPC meeting agenda. This was in response to Commissioner Smith's question.

Director Todd explained that Staff is aware that the permit was issued in error by Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED). He explained that it is believed the current ongoing construction work is the realigning of the street, and there is no construction work by GLWA for the pump station. Mr. Todd mentioned that during a recent site visit he noticed current activity. He stated that Staff will officially verify and confirm the current activity at the site by the next CPC meeting. This statement was in response to Commissioners Lewis' and Smith's questions.

V. Unfinished Business –

- A.** Consideration of the request of Tina Castleberry to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-60, District Map No. 58 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show a B2 (Local Business and Residential) zoning classification where a R3 (Low Density Residential) zoning classification is currently shown at 4213 and 4225 West Davison Avenue, generally bounded by West Davison Avenue to the north, Petosky Avenue to the east, Waverly Avenue to the south, and Broadstreet Avenue to the west.
(TS) (STATUS REPORT) 30 min

Timarie Szwed discussed a status update on the rezoning of the property site. The last hearing date was March 6, 2025, but CPC did not take action. Since that time there is activity at the business, Garden Bug, and a Detroit Free Press article printed. Staff has been working with BSEED, PDD, Department of Neighborhoods and other applicable departments to answer CPC's and the community's questions. CPC Staff has been conducting regular site visits, making similar circumstantial comparisons, and analyzing the business and rezoning. It is anticipated that this matter will return in July 2025.

Ms. Szwed stated that the business opened on April 26; however, the site is zoned R3 which is not appropriate. This was in response to Commissioner Lewis' inquiries.

Deputy Director Chris Gulock stated that the Law Dept and BSEED are actively monitoring the situation.

VI. New Business – There was no New Business.

VII. Staff Report – There was no Staff Report.

VIII. Member Report – There was no Member Report.

IX. Communications – Director Marcell Todd discussed the PDD Master Plan amendment for Rogell Park formerly Golf Course located at Lahser and Seven Mile Road in District 1. The property's ownership was returned to the City, and it is now used as a park. The City in conjunction with Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) issued an RFP to redevelop 22 acres of the northern portion in preparation for redevelopment to a commercial, mixed or institutional use. The land should be rezoned from PR in preparation for a future development. A 43-day notice as required by the State Planning Enabling Act has been issued. CPC Staff wanted to make Commissioners aware of PDD's communications and Staff's action to begin the rezoning process.

X. Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.