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City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES

July 31, 2025

5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:24 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett, Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza, Ritchie Harrison, Gwen Lewis, Frederick Russell (depart 8:23 pm), Donovan Smith and Rachel Udabe

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

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

II. Meeting minutes of March 20, 2025.

Commissioner Udabe moved to approve the Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Daniels. Motion Approved.

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. 5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING – Zoning Ordinance text amendment, Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code – to update regulations, procedures, and definitions relative to housing and parking requirements as requested by the office of the City of Detroit Chief Operating Officer (**Deputy COO Andrea Taverna and various City Agencies**).
90 min

Present: Marcus von Kapff, Andrea Taverna, David Bell, Erinn Harris, Julie Schneider, Alexa Bush, and Amanda Elias

Director Marcell Todd introduced Administration's team members, and explained that this public hearing is a formal presentation of the proposed zoning text amendments.

Marcus von Kapff, Chief Operating Officer, stated that the proposed four zoning amendments focus on increasing the City's housing supply and match its population growth. The modifications will allow residents and local developers to participate in their own neighborhoods. Also, this presentation will address questions from last meeting's informational presentation.

Andrea Taverna, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated July 25, 2025, the proposal to amend the zoning ordinance specifically types of homes built in R2, building on vacant lots, multi-family buildings in commercial corridors, and parking lot flexibility. She stated that these proposed amendments will enable the City to increase its housing supply, protect longtime residents from displacement or high housing prices, and provide easier avenues for residents and small developers to improve and invest in their neighborhoods. She discussed statistics on last year's City population increase of an additional 7,000 more residents, and explained it is estimated the City needs 2,700 – 3,500 housing units produced to meet the challenge and keep pace with adequate housing (diagrams shown).

Ms. Taverna explained in the proposed amendment all three-unit buildings, four-unit buildings or townhouses will be allowed by-right in R2 zoning classification. Also, the number of allowable units conditionally is proposed to increase up to 12-unit buildings with a maximum of 2-3 stories tall. She clearly stated that these type of conditional developments in R2 will require a Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department, Special Land Use hearing (SLU). During an SLU hearing process, residents are noticed and will have an opportunity to give feedback on any newly proposed development in their neighborhood.

Ms. Taverna discussed that the proposed amendment would decrease the complexity to rebuild on vacant lots mirroring the existing homes in the neighborhood. The amendment will give flexibility with sizing and spacing of homes built on a vacant lot. It would apply to vacant lots that are below minimum size or width in R2-R6 zones. She clarified that the Historic District Commission will make the final decision on developments in designated historic districts.

Ms. Taverna discussed that the proposed amendment as suggested by CPC Staff would allow multi-family residential dwellings by-right in B2, B4, and B5 zoning districts commercial corridors. This would broaden opportunities for mixed-use buildings and offer more small business customers.

Ms. Taverna stated it is proposed that parking lot options are amended to offer moderate flexibility on size. The parking lot modifications are incremental changes based on location, clientele, and business activities, such as frequent transit areas. These changes will give builders more options on deciding how much parking to provide for their project. She gave specific details on how an amendment would affect how BSEED waives, regulates, calculates and approves parking requirement.

Ms. Taverna mentioned a potential proposed amendment for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) offering smaller and lower costs options and allowing residents an opportunity to build income generating or family focus housing with using ADUs.

Ms. Taverna stated that community engagement will continue in August. Also, she explained how the presented proposal fits in with Zone Detroit, Master Plan update, and PDD neighborhood framework plans.

Director Erinn Harris of Department of Neighborhoods, discussed community engagement stating, “We had 120 plus residents engaged so far across six meetings in District 1, District 3, District 4, District 5, and District 6.” She mentioned that there is an upcoming meeting August 19 in District 6, and the City received 16 letters of support. Director Harris stated, “Generally, support for building more housing especially options for residents and neighborhood developers to build.” Further, Director Harris explained, “Many comment on programmatic approaches to housing and land, purchasing public land, designing for neighborhood context, and how neighborhoods can weigh in on development projects. Relatively positive feedback at the meetings on zoning proposals when weighing in on each item.”

Ms. Taverna discussed the next steps of the proposal to work on providing preapproved designs in a developer’s earlier stages; upgrading technology and website for public access and more user friendly; and development time lines (slide shown).

Commissioner Lewis stated her concerns about the Detroit Land Bank Authority’s restrictions on residents building on side lots and she asked that these restrictions are removed from the issued deeds. Commissioner Russell expressed similar concerns.

Director Todd answered that the proposed parking amendments are a concern that requires further analysis and consideration. This statement was made to address Commissioner Smith’s expressed concerns regarding reducing parking and off-street residential parking.

Public Testimony

Hyvert McGrady commented concerns on the new proposal and historic districts. He has concerns regarding developer projects in historic districts, developers requesting variances, and already existing limited space for parking especially in historic districts.

Joel Batterman, a member of Transportation Riders United, commented on the use of small-scale multi-family housing, reducing housing costs, and need for a more transit friendly City.

Ms. Amy Hemmeter commented support for the proposed amendment. She stated her viewpoint on the use of vacant lots, reduced parking, and better transit.

Deanne Austin of Transportation Riders United commented support for the proposed amendment. She discussed aligning land use policy with transportation goals, transit, and increased housing.

Sean Minty commented support for the proposed amendment. He mentioned his pleasure in multi-family housing and allowing more housing in R2 benefits the neighborhood’s density, walkability, and businesses.

Justin Panhans commented in support for the proposed amendment. The zoning change will make it easier for multi-generational communities in the neighborhoods. He explained he does not want parking lots but prefers more greenspace, local business, or more housing.

John Bolt commented in support for the proposed amendment. He stated that the City will lose residents without reform. Also, he discussed parking requirements, and he explained

parking benefits districts in neighborhoods.

Mitchell Montey commented in support for the proposed amendment. He mentioned the high cost of parking, importance of housing people than housing cars, and focus on people's needs.

Francis Grunow commented on behalf of Detroiters on Parking Reform relaying its support for the proposed amendment. He mentioned his pleasure in more affordable housing, use of vacant lots, and requiring few parking spaces.

Christoper O'Brien commented in support for the proposed amendment. He is in favor of swiftly increasing density and viable transit.

James Perry commented in support for the proposed amendment. He stated that this will bring jobs and housing. He quoted a (2022, September 12) *Crains Detroit Business* article regarding minimum parking requirements and local businesses.

David Alade of Century Partners and Real Estate Association Developers (READ) commented in support for the proposed amendment. He mentioned displeasure of the challenges of small developers and lengthy rezoning process. He stated pleasure in the proposed recommendations, and it will reduce costs and time for developers.

Jacob Graham commented displeasure in BSEED's process for residential back porch home renovations. He commented in support for the proposed amendment for making regulations easier and not being required to go through the variance process for home repairs.

Todd Sachse of Broder & Sachse Real Estate and Detroit Developer Round Table commented in support for the proposed amendment. He believes the proposal is great for the City, and it will make it easier for developers to build houses.

Sonya Mays of Develop Detroit and READ commented in support for the proposed amendment. She stated these proposed changes will ensure affordable housing for residents, and it will change difficult, time-consuming, and expensive processes to build. She promotes building duplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and rebuilding on vacant lots.

Bill Cheek commented displeasure in the community engagement and the presentation to the neighborhood and a Corktown proposal.

Stephanie Osterland of Habitat of Humanity of Detroit commented support for the proposal. She stated that as a developer the zoning changes will create multiple types of housing to help offset the housing deficit. Also, she stated that the proposed changes will allow more variance for constructing housing units making the variance process less lengthy and less difficulty of requirements to build on two adjacent lots and combining lots.

Edward Carrington a real estate developer commented support for the proposal. He mentioned that the proposal will help residents, developers, and he provided his viewpoint on the parking requirements benefits and improve commercial corridors.

Richard commented support and importance of mixed-use housing, and he supports more multifamily dwellings on commercial corridors.

Adam Cook commented in support for proposed amendment. He emphasized his viewpoint on the parking portion of the amendment.

David G. commented support for proposed amendment and lower parking minimum, development of vacant lots and more density.

Rebecca commented support for proposed amendment. She mentioned the benefits of affordable housing developers, and wants parking minimum eliminated altogether. She desires that ADUs are allowed by right.

Ross Shaw commented support for proposed amendment and benefits will include make more walkable and attractive to others to live for current and new residents.

Josh Lerky commented support for proposed amendment. He mentioned his concerns on parking minimums should be eliminated, commercial uses allowed by right, set back requirement further reduced, lot maximum coverage increased, historic buildings, and no combining units decreasing costs for residents and developers.

Gregg Silvey commented support for the proposal. He stated he desires more housing, more transit, more walkable streets, less parking, and ADUs added.

John Wiley an attorney that works with developers commented support and highlighted the challenges developers face with the current administrative process and variances. He provided his viewpoints on parking reduction benefits.

Director Todd mentioned that this matter will return at a later date. Additionally, he said that due to the feedback received by CPC and from the public, some concerns will be further analyzed and addressed. He anticipates a status report will be presented at the next CPC meeting on September 4, 2025.

IV. Public Comment – There was no Public Comment.

V. Unfinished Business – There was no Unfinished Business.

A. Consideration of the request of the Detroit Land Bank Authority in conjunction with the Detroit City Planning Commission as co-petitioner to rezone the property located at 4838 Trumbull where a PD (Planned Development) zoning classification is shown to an R5 (Medium Density Residential) zoning classification in addition to the properties located at 4830 Trumbull and 4827 Lincoln where a PD (Planned Development) zoning classification is shown to an SD1 (Special Development District Small Scale, Mixed Use) zoning classification. **(DP) (RECOMMEND APPROVAL) 30 min**

Present: Mark Jones and Rob Lynn, Detroit Land Bank Authority
Dolores Perales, CPC Staff

Dolores Perales presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated July 30, 2025, a proposed rezoning request from the Detroit Land Bank Authority for 4830 Trumbull, 4838 Trumbull, and 4827 Lincoln. The site is located in District 6, Jeffries Neighborhood. The CPC joined the rezoning request as co-petitioner to include 4838 Trumbull (owned by Citadel of Faith) to ensure lot consistency. It was noted that the property address 4830 Trumbull would appropriately become split zone parcels from PD to R5 to SD-1 and 4827

Lincoln from PD to SD1 zoning classification. Ms. Perales discussed the site's background as previously a part of the University City 2 urban renewal area redevelopment plan. The site's original development plans were halted due to community opposition. Ms. Perales explained details of the important required correction of an error that occurred during the site's lot combination process of 4830 Trumbull, 4822 Trumbull, and 4827 Lincoln. The DLBA and Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD) have collaborated to pursue and manage a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process for small-scale mixed-use development affordable housing. Also, the rezoning will allow Citadel of Faith to use the parcel for church parking. The Planning and Development Department (PDD) interpreted that the proposed rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan.

Ms. Perales discussed DLBA's community engagement wherein they posted on community bulletin boards at local parks, and presented the proposed rezoning in March 2025 with the Woodbridge Citizens' Council and Woodbridge Neighborhood Development Corporation. During the presentation residents stated concerns on parking and design and DLBA addressed their concerns. She noted that the community feedback was mostly positive. CPC Staff received a letter pertaining to parking concerns. Additionally, DLBA met with Citadel of Faith regarding the proposed rezoning. Citadel of Faith noted that they have maintained 4830 Trumbull and 4827 Lincoln since 2012. Citadel of Faith offers support for their parcel's rezoning (4838 Trumbull) to R5; however, Citadel of Faith is hesitant to support a rezoning of the DLBA parcels. DLBA is willing to sell the parcels with the condition that they are developed for mixed-use affordable housing. Currently, Citadel of Faith is not interested in developing mixed-use affordable housing.

Ms. Perales reviewed outcomes and concerns raised at the June 26, 2025, public hearing. There were seven public comments made in opposition. The public comments centered on Citadel of Faith acquiring the parcels and support of a potential takeover of the lots. After the public hearing additional community engagement was suggested by CPC, and CPC Staff has received nine letters of support from community in the Woodbridge area and one letter from the Woodbridge Neighborhood Development Corporation.

Additionally, DLBA conducted follow-up engagement with Citadel of Faith on July 11, 2025, to discuss 4830 Trumbull, and its parking lot portion and 4827 Lincoln. DLBA expressed willingness to sell to Citadel of Faith and provided an opportunity to buy; however, Citadel of Faith has not applied to make a purchase. Further, it was clarified on record that DLBA's legal team advised that according to Michigan law Citadel of Faith is not permitted to an adverse possession claim.

Ms. Perales stated that CPC Staff recommends approval of the proposed rezoning.

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve Staff's recommendation, seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion Approved.

VI. New Business – There was no New Business.

VII. Staff Report –There was no Staff Report.

VIII. Member Report – There were no Member Reports.

IX. Communications – Director Marcell Todd stated there is a communication from the City of Oak Park signing off on the proposed Master Plan amendment in regarding the former golf course at

Rogell Park. This matter will be before the Commission at a later meeting.

X. Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.