

Donovan Smith, AICP  
Chairperson  
Rachel Udabe  
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.  
Director  
Christopher Gulock, AICP  
Deputy Director

**City of Detroit**  
**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
Detroit, Michigan 48226  
Phone: (313) 224-6225 Fax: (313) 224-4336  
e-mail: [cpc@detroitmi.gov](mailto:cpc@detroitmi.gov)

Adrian-Keith Bennett  
Kenneth R. Daniels  
David Esparza, AIA, LEED  
Ritchie Harrison  
Gwendolyn Lewis, MBA  
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.

## City Planning Commission Meeting

**MINUTES**  
**September 18, 2025**  
***Delayed Start 6:00 P.M.***

### I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 7:23 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett (depart 9:34 pm), Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza, Ritchie Harrison, Gwen Lewis (depart 9:08 pm), Frederick Russell, Donovan Smith, and Rachel Udabe

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

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

### II. Meeting minutes

Meeting minutes of May 15, 2025.

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

### III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **6:00 PM PRESENTATION and DISCUSSION** – Detroit Land Bank Authority, CEO Tammy Daniels **60 min**

Present: CEO Tammy Daniels and Director of Planning & Analysis Rob Linn, Detroit Land Bank Authority

Director Marcell Todd introduced CEO Tammy Daniels, Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA). He explained that the DLBA is appearing before CPC to address questions and

concerns raised in relation to the pending COO ordinance amendments.

CEO Tammy Daniels (DLBA) presented via PowerPoint an overview of the Detroit Land Bank Authority, and she described the many accomplishments of DLBA. The DLBA's peak of inventory at 115,000 pieces of publicly owned property has been reduced to less than 65,000 pieces due to the significant number of sales over the past 10 years. She attributed much of DLBA's success in sales to its key programs: 1) Auction; 2) Own It Now; 3) Side/Neighborhood Lot Program; 4) Rehabbed and Ready; and 5) Buy Back Program. Currently, DLBA's inventory contains 59,000 pieces of vacant land with approximately 1,500 salvage structures remaining.

CEO Daniels described a slide of DLBA fast facts as follows:

- "50,000+ closings since 2014
- 12,000+ homes rehabbed and returned to productive use across Detroit
- 6,000+ Detroit residents have become homeowners through DLBA programs
- 30,000+ vacant lots sold to Detroiters and transformed
- Collectively, the Land Bank and the City demolition program have touched 1 in 5 homes across Detroit
- In 2024 alone, 82% of DLBA buyers were Detroit residents – community members investing in their own neighborhoods!"

There were photos shown of sold DLBA properties/homes and vacant lots in before and after (rehab) condition. Additionally, there were pictures displaying the financial impact of costs and fair market value of actual rehabilitation. She mentioned DLBA's goal is to save as many houses as possible and return property to good productive use in the City.

CEO Daniels explained that in contrast to the majority purchased lots the DLBA has sold less than 20 lots with deed restrictions. DLBA has a limitation on sale on some lots due to its Inclusive Housing Opportunity Area Program. The program limits the amount an owner of a side lot can sell it for in a particular area. She explained this method promotes affordable housing and monitors flipping prices. For example, DLBA restricts deeds to prevent flipping wherein it sold a lot for \$100, and same lot is flipped for \$50,000 to a developer who builds a structure on it. The new house due to the flip is more expensive and not affordable resulting in residents placing out of the housing market competition. This statement was in response to Commissioner Lewis' inquiries on why DLBA has limitations and deed restrictions.

CEO Daniels stated the DLBA has authority to waive the restrictions on side lots. This statement was in response to Commissioner Lewis' questions.

Commissioner Lewis stated displeasure in DLBA's deed restrictions and limiting the return on investment to a family that purchased a side lot for \$100. She shared her advocacy for residents that purchased lots to have equal opportunity to build.

CEO Daniels stated that generally commercial property is properly handled by Detroit Building Authority. DLBA only deals with residential properties. This was in response to Commissioner Daniels' question.

CEO Daniels discussed DLBA's Rehab and Ready program examines neighborhoods with little mortgage activity. They seek out these areas to continue building, and it enables DLBA to increase property values for the residents. They fully complete a rehabilitation

and sell the property at market rate which often results in a DLBA loss. Since DLBA is not in the business of making money it uses generous funding of philanthropic partners that cover the loss and keep program improvements going in the neighborhoods. This statement was in response to Commissioner Udabe's questions.

CEO Daniels stated the DLBA has increased their community engagement. They have third party door knocking campaigns to inform people of their eligibility to apply for the offered DLBA programs. The goal is to get as many people to qualify as possible. This statement was in response to Commissioner Daniels' questions.

Commissioner Smith requested, based on the applicable COO proposed ordinance modifications, if the DLBA would provide a breakdown of its inventoried properties by zoning districts, specifically R1-R6, and clarify its preparedness for an influx of interests in development potential on R2 parcels.

**B. 7:00 PM PRESENTATION** – Consideration of 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 CPC Staff) **STATUS REPORT** 60 min

Present: Marcus von Kapff, Chief Operating Officer  
Andrea Taverna, Deputy Chief Operating Officer

Director Marcell Todd introduced colleagues COO Marcus von Kapff and Deputy COO Andrea Taverna, and he expressed pleasure in providing status update to the Commission pertaining to the advancement made in composing the proposed amendments of the ordinance.

Marcus von Kapff stated the team considers CPC feedback as serious. He noted that CPC's concerns and requests have been incorporated in preparation of the proposal for the ordinance amendments.

Deputy COO Andrea Taverna presented via PowerPoint detailed updates to the proposed ordinance amendments. She provided a brief overview of the CPC meetings of July 17, 2025, an introduction and July 31, 2025, first public hearing involving the initial three proposed amendments. She discussed there are now five proposals offered. The two new proposals are adding accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and residential apartments on commercial corridors. A public hearing notice has been issued and distributed regarding these two additional proposals to be held on October 2, 2025. She requested CPC approve same day action on October 2, 2025. Further, Deputy COO Taverna discussed that the goal is to increase housing supply, decrease pressure of rising housing costs, and assist local developers in becoming forefront builders in the City. An amendment may remove zoning barriers and support local developers to build/rehabilitate, specifically in R2 zoning districts (most vacant).

Deputy COO Andrea Taverna summarized status five amendment proposals as follows:

1. It is proposed to expand housing types that are eligible to be built by right in R2 districts in triplexes, quads, and townhouses. Also, that will apply the City's Residential Architecture Compatibility Standard to triplexes and quads.

2. It is proposed to make it easier to rebuild on vacant lots by allowing sizing and spacing that matches the earlier homes in the neighborhood. Also, that it will utilize a sliding scale to adjust the side setbacks based on the width of the lot.
3. It is proposed to provide more flexibility on parking lot size in targeted cases (residential and commercial). Also, that it will standardize parking lot requirements for multifamily or apartment buildings citywide to 0.75 spaces per unit. This provision gives a standardized requirement and maintains a cautious approach on the changes. Deputy COO Taverna attributed credit CPC Staff for suggesting this portion of the parking proposal as the team reached consensus. Also, that it will make feasible for projects to propose parking alternatives in instances of appropriate land uses nearby. The commercial parking portion proposes to expand the existing exemptions for small commercial uses making it easier to offer a district approach to parking and may opt to share parking with the uses around them. Also, it is proposed to offer a discount in parking calculation for small commercial spaces and mixed-use buildings.
4. It is proposed to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) or carriage houses. These dwellings are typically located in the backyard and detached from the main house offering diverse lower cost housing option. The ordinance amendment proposes to allow ADUs in R2-R6 districts. Also, that it will move forward with caution to test how this addition develops over an appropriate proven time. It is suggested to limit ADU size when principal use of 1200 square feet or 60% of the size of primary house structure and 25 feet in height.
5. It is proposed to allow residential only apartment buildings on commercial corridors. This will be permitted in B2 and B4, and it excludes central business districts (B5).

Deputy COO Taverna as follow-up from the July 31, 2025 CPC meeting discussed newly implemented changes to Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) and its improvements to transit services. She read excerpts from a memo dated September 15, 2025, written by DDOT Executive Director Robert Cramer, regarding a DDOT Service Enhancement Plan. The goal is to provide more frequent, reliable, and safe service and offer transit options for Detroiters.

Deputy COO Taverna stated the City received 19 letters of support from developers and community. She discussed community engagement of 14 meetings held either district-by-district or city-wide. She described these 14 community engagement meetings as being attended by approximately 300 residents. During a description of the feedback, she stated that the meetings end with a request for a show of hands which results in about 60%-90% of support to 70%-75% average. It was noted that neighborhoods with the most disinvestment exhibit the deepest support for the proposal. Also, many residents show interest in building ADUs. She relayed that residents living in R1 zones display large support for maintaining existing policy standards.

Commissioner Udabe asked if short-term rental will be allowed in ADUs, or are ADUs only for permanent occupancy?

Director Todd clarified that ADUs are not permitted as short-term rentals at this time. He stated that it may become necessary to incorporate proactive language to the ADU proposal.

**IV. Public Comment –**

Ashley Jordan commented that the CPC meeting is insightful, and she appreciated observing the City Council interviews for a new Ombudsman. She asked about plans on investing in the City’s residents, sustainability, offering self-sufficiency, and Master Plan general information.

Director Todd provided a brief response of City Council’s rules and procedures on selecting a 10-year term City Ombudsman. Also, he briefly discussed the Zone Detroit project and the Master Plan process. He referred the public to the Plan Detroit website for in-depth information and for keeping abreast on upcoming events and activities (<https://plan-detroit.webflow.io/>).

Diane Patterson commented raising concerns regarding ADU permit enforcement and ample parking.

**V. Unfinished Business –** There was no Unfinished Business.

**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 –** There were no Communications.

**X. Adjournment –**

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.