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

City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES
October 2, 2025
5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Vice Chairperson Rachel Udabe called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza, Ritchie Harrison, Gwen Lewis, Frederick Russell, and Rachel Udabe

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

The meeting agenda without amendments was accepted.

II. Meeting minutes

Meeting minutes of June 6, 2024 and April 3, 2025.

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the June 6, 2024 Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the April 3, 2025 Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. Motion Approved.

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – to consider the request of Bradley DeVris on behalf of Daniel A. Washington and NW Goldberg Cares in conjunction with the Detroit City Planning Commission to rezone the properties located at 6106 15th Street, 6116 15th Street, 6122 15th Street, 6128 15th Street, 6134 15th Street, 6140 15th Street, and 6146 15th Street where an R2 (Two-Family Residential) zoning classification is shown to an R3 (Low Density Residential) zoning classification. **(DP)** **45 min**

Present: Daniel Washington and Jordan Yagiela of NW Goldberg Cares
Dolores Perales-Lara, CPC Staff

Dolores Perales-Lara presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated September 29, 2025, a request to rezone from R2 to R3. The site is located in District 5, Northwest Goldberg neighborhood. The Northwest Goldberg Cares organization educates residents between the ages of four to eight years utilizing their Holland Maze literacy and enrichment program. The petitioner wants to expand education services and proposes developing a new 1,600 square foot schoolhouse style nonprofit center. The schoolhouse will have a classroom, restrooms, kitchenette, staff offices, youth soft zone and comfort space. It will be inclusive of all abilities and compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The building expansion is planned at 6134, 6140, and 6146 15th Street. Ms. Perales-Lara explained, "Under current R2 zoning, the minimum lot size for a neighborhood center is 10,000 square feet requiring a variance; however, if rezoned to R3 the requirement drops to 7,000 square feet." Further, she explains this means the current square footage of the petitioner's lot size fits the requirements for R3 zoning by right, and this is the reason for a rezoning. The City Planning Commission has joined as co-petitioner to rezone four parcels ensuring entire block consistency and avoiding spot zoning. It was noted that one parcel is not owned by the Northwest Goldberg Cares. She reviewed the surrounding zoning in the area and displayed an aerial view slide. The Planning and Development Department (PDD) interpretation found that the rezoning to R3 is consistent with the Master Plan. Northwest Goldberg Cares organization carried out community outreach via door knocking with direct contact with 15th Street residents, and it communicated with a neighboring nonprofit organization, Mezuzah Detroit. During engagement, Northwest Goldberg Cares discovered the community's interests, addressed concerns, and received feedback. The community expressed general support. CPC Staff received two letters of support for the rezoning.

Daniel A. Washington described Northwest Goldberg Cares' background, education program success, expansion project's purpose, and building plans. He mentioned they serve an average of 2,000 residents in the neighborhood. The facility is a hub for the community, and he displayed photos via PowerPoint of past events held in their public spaces. The expansion of the building will be similar to a ranch style structure, and two elevation views of the project were shown. There will be an ADA area. There will not be an adjacent parking lot; however, street parking will be encouraged to manage traffic congestion.

Mr. Washington responded that they have raised funds of \$150,000 and anticipate additional financial support after the rezoning approval. Also, Jordan Yagiela stated she has a builder's license, and they will have the assistance of an experienced developer mentor. These statements were in answer to Commissioner Lewis' questions.

Jordan Yagiela responded that local Detroit owned contractors and black and brown business owners are being utilized during their project. Also, the total cost of the expansion project is approximately \$600,000 with a project completion date to August 2026. This was in response to Commissioner Daniels inquiries.

Public Testimony

Rochelle Steward commented concerns, yet she withdrew after Commissioner Udabe advised her that this is about a schoolhouse not residential.

Victoria Washington commented her support as a Northwest Goldberg neighborhood resident. She expressed gratitude that her daughter attended the literacy program, and the benefits will enhance the community. Further, she enjoyed the community meeting and the founder of the organization.

Nedra Hall commented in support of the proposed rezoning.

Dr. Sarosh Irani commented in support of the proposed rezoning. He is familiar with the owner and knows of the positivity that Mr. Washington has brought to the community.

Commissioner Harrison, Commissioner Esparza, and Commissioner Lewis emphasized the need for a more defined site plan to be prepared and presented for this project.

Ms. Perales-Lara explained that Staff will ensure that the petitioner presents a site plan when the rezoning is before City Council. Also, the petitioner is aware that since 16 parking spaces are required they must apply for a parking variance.

Commissioner Daniels moved to suspend same day requirements, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

Commissioner Daniels moved that CPC support this item, seconded by Commissioner Russell.

There was a Roll Call Vote:

5 Yays - Daniels, Esparza, Harrison, Russell, and Udabe

1 Nay - Lewis

Motion Approved

- B. 6:00 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – to consider the proposed 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 (COO Marcus Von Kapff, Deputy COO Andrea Taverna, various City Agencies and CPC Staff

90 min

Present: Marcus von Kapff, Chief Operating Officer
Andrea Taverna, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
David Bell, Director, Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Dept.
Joshua Roberson, Deputy Director, Department of Neighborhoods

Director Marcell Todd introduced City officials present at the public hearing and stated the proposed provisions are a set of zoning ordinance text amendments placed in by the Chief Operating Officer office. He described this initiative as a compilation of recommendations stemming from consultants, the Administration team, and CPC Staff with the primary goal to increase the capacity of housing in the City. This matter is based on CPC report dated October 2, 2025.

Deputy COO Andrea Taverna presented via PowerPoint a zoning ordinance text amendment proposal. She began by describing the project's timeline from July 2025 community engagement, introduction to CPC, first public hearing, update at CPC meeting,

and second public hearing. She requested that CPC consider same day approval due to an ambitious timeline (seven weeks), so the proposal moves to enter the City Council process. Ms. Taverna explained the reasons why the amendments are needed to build more housing, protect long-term residents, and keep pace with population increase and housing demand. Also, she provided goals of the amendments (1) to increase housing supply, (2) moderate housing price increase, and (3) level the playing field for residents and small developers. Ms. Taverna mentioned the proposal adds more flexibility and alleviates complicated rules in the zoning ordinance.

Deputy COO Taverna stated zoning ordinance text modifications as follows:

1. It is proposed to allow more housing types eligible to be built by right in R2 districts in triplexes, quadruplexes, and townhouses (housing examples shown). The expansion will change to include up to 8-12 units at two to three stores high; however, this provision will need a Buildings Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department Special Land Use process and public hearing notice to neighbors before an approval.
2. It is proposed to allow accessory dwelling units (ADU) or carriage houses defined as independent dwellings located in backyards (photo examples shown). This provides a dwelling for a family member at a lower cost. The approach is to initially set guidelines as pilot ADUs and provisions can be expanded or modified over time.
3. It is proposed to allow residential-only apartments by right on B2 and B4 parcels.
4. It is proposed to standardize parking to 0.75 parking spaces per unit. Also, a provision to allow developers to provide an alternative parking plan according to their business needs.
5. It is proposed to allow to rebuild on vacant lots and permitting sizing and spacing that matches the earlier homes in the neighborhood.

Deputy COO Taverna stated that the Historic District Commission will continue to make the final determination with any amendments on projects in historic districts.

Deputy Director Joshua Roberson, Department of Neighborhoods, discussed the amendment proposal's community engagement of 14 community meetings. They held district specific meetings and neighborhood specific meetings attended by 300 residents. It was noted that several dozen neighborhood and block clubs pass the word to the residents. Also, he described the community engagement as hosting District 3, District 4, District 5, and District 6 meetings. During the meetings, they explore the residents' preferences such as desire for infill housing and increase in neighbors and density. For example, in Jefferson-Chalmers on Kitchener Street (District 4), there are almost no houses on the blocks, so their block clubs have expressed seeking more dense neighborhoods. Additionally, during the engagement meetings it was explained that many of the houses are grandfathered in and already exist in the zoning areas. They expressed that in Districts 1, 2 and 7 where there is a lot of R1 is unaffected.

Deputy COO Taverna recapped the July 31, 2025, public hearing stating 21 commenters were in support, two public comments in opposition, and receipt of 19 letters of support from nonprofit organizations and local business.

Director Marcell Todd stated there were approximately 22 letters received with one in opposition.

Public Testimony

Bill Cheek commented concerns on lack of public engagement, side lots purchases prohibited, discrimination, and non-Detroit residents' and developers outside of Detroit opinions. This proposed amendment is a significant change of zoning in the City.

James Eveslage, small-scale developer, commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He stated that the current zoning code blocks and kicks out the small developer and favors large developers.

Tim Cook commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He stated it will be impactful to create additional housing units, and he relayed his experience of observing these type of changes in zoning positively in Atlanta, Georgia.

James Perry commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He stated the amendment is a positive change and beneficial in job access, transit, walkability, parking lots, and living in commercial corridors.

Ian Laidley commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He has learned through conversation of the challenges of local developers in obtaining variances and too expensive to build under the current zoning. He wants more neighbors.

Amy Hemmeter commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. She mentioned her concerns about the possibility of losing City park space in order to build affordable housing. She wants more affordable housing and values density, transit, and walkability. She wants more neighbors.

Sean Menty commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He mentioned the dangers of less density and benefits of more people in the neighborhood. The more density, more people watching discourages criminal activity (arson). Vacant land is not good for his environment.

John Wiley commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He stated the benefits of having a diverse type of housing and more people living in the neighborhood. He supports local developers' rehab on apartments. He spoke on road blocks to obtain variances, costly time-consuming process that may eliminate developments.

Peter Young commented in support of the text amendment. He wants more neighbors, an active vibrant streetscape, and transit no car required. He is familiar with the challenging process to build.

Jaden Slaughter commented support for the text amendment. He expressed pleasure with the proposal due to more housing, making rebuilding easier, and more affordable. The benefits density, transportation, and walkability. He looks forward to being able to afford a house in Detroit.

Deanne Austin commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. She mentioned it will help Detroit build more housing, more fair opportunities, and eventually

stop the displacement of legacy Detroiters.

Mitch Manty commented support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He wants more neighbors, and agrees that this is a massive change to Detroit housing policy.

Dr. Sarosh Irani commented in support of the proposed zoning text amendment. He stated new housing, adding density, improving walkability and increasing economics has a huge positive impact on the mental and physical health of residents.

Reverend Cheryl Clark commented her concerns stating she wants development in the City, but she encouraged CPC to consider long-term residents and how will they be impacted.

Tyson Gersh commented opposition of the proposed zoning text amendment. He was not aware of the community meetings with block club presidents. He agreed that this is the largest change to zoning in Detroit. He stated that the participants in support are reading from scripts. He objected to the parking proposal.

JoAnn Warwick, Inclusionary Planning Matters, commented that the City is corrupt and has manufactured community engagement. Also, she commented her displeasure in not receiving responses to her emails. She spoke on the solar project, infill housing, unanswered questions, Board of Zoning Appeals transcript charges, and Master Plan Advisory Group.

Janice Hazel, a representative of the Aviation Subdivision neighborhood, commented opposition of the proposed zoning text amendment. She stated concerns with loss of community voice, granting higher density by right, development reviewed case by case, and conflict with Master Plan. She also mentioned disinvestment and displacement.

Ross Shaw commented support for proposed zoning text amendments. He mentioned diversity of housing, residents, reduction in parking minimums, need for less parking, and denser walkable and safer for residents.

Emma commented support for proposed zoning text amendments. She mentioned she wants more neighbors and finds pleasure in neighborhood framework plans. She supports lower barriers for people to bring new types of housing for diversity and stronger long-term neighborhoods.

David Graff commented support for proposed zoning text amendments. He stated his pleasure in the provisions of living near businesses, transit, walkable streets, and a variety of housing. He stated the current zoning code makes it difficult.

Dorothy Arnold commented opposition to the proposed zoning text amendments. She does not want the City to treat every community the same. She spoke on the blight ordinance in working class neighborhoods and more community engagement.

Joshua Larky commented in support for proposed zoning text amendments. He stated his displeasure in houses being required to be built on multiple lots and setback requirements. He wants to eliminate parking requirements throughout the City.

Cindy Darwin in support for proposed zoning text amendments. She advised that houses are being built too close. She spoke on water draining in neighborhoods and departments

to separate blight.

Jacob commented in support for proposed zoning text amendments. He relayed an experience when he went through the difficult variance process to rebuild his back porch.

Shakira commented being undecided because she likes developers building single-family homes, but she does not desire a developer building an apartment building next door. She does not agree with having two-family flats that do not resemble other homes on the block. There are new residents speaking, but not long-term residents.

Brian commented support for proposed zoning text amendments. He wants less parking restrictions for current and future residents.

Richard commented in support for proposed zoning text amendments. He stated this amendment will be making it easier, introducing competition in the housing market, and increasing the housing supply. He aspires to own a home, yet it looks bleak without increasing density and housing supply.

Charlotte commented that the proposal seems good for those that live near the riverfront and downtown area, yet it is different for the remainder of Detroit. She mentioned walkability and the need of a car. This massively reduces parking for apartments from 1.25 per unit to .75 per unit. This a neighborhood problem. These amendments propose too many changes in one document, and should be split-up. Detroit has cheaper houses and let people buy houses.

Community engagement commented opposed the changes to R2 zoning. There needs to be more community engagement district by district, since every district is different. She is unaware of any engagement meetings with their block club with these changes. It is not improving their neighborhoods. They are treated like trash. She noticed that developers may have an F rating on Google, but approved. She would not want a four-story apartment blocking her view and monitored parking is needed.

Joe G. commented in support for proposed zoning text amendments. He enjoys living on a street with single family homes and apartments with residents of all ages. He feels that there is too much parking. He uses transit to get to work.

Keegan commented in opposition to the proposed zoning text amendments. He stated it is overly broad and far reaching. Many residents are unaware of this discussion, and this big change will have great impact. He urged officials to seek more community engagement.

Francis Grunow commented in support of Detroit's parking reform. He mentioned more housing diversity, affordability of housing and better parking management. He appreciates parking reform with a reduction in parking to 0.75. Other cities that are making changes to parking and that have eliminated parking minimums.

Angela Jackson commented opposition to the proposed zoning text amendments. She requested that all communities should not be impacted and the proposal is too broad. She agrees that community engagement should be district by district.

Renata Miller commented opposition to the proposed zoning text amendments. She mentioned the importance of community engagement, and this should be applied case by case basis. She admonished residents pay taxes and deserve due honor and respect.

Parking in front of houses is unfair. She emphasized the upcoming election, and questioned this proposal's rush. She explained more community engagement is necessary.

Deputy Director Joshua Roberson responded that District 5 had the largest meeting and 60 people attended. Also, Districts 1, 2, and 7 are primarily R1, so they will not be affected. District 4 neighborhoods have highly dense vacant R2 lands, and they met with their community. This statement was in response to Commissioner Harrison's inquiries.

Director Marcell Todd stated that CPC Staff recognized the ambitious timeline that was placed on the proposal and desired to accommodate, yet Staff would have liked to see more community engagement. He suggested that it may be most advantageous to have more citywide DON Casts, and more meetings in the targeted areas to clarify aspects of the proposal for the most impacted residents. This statement was in response to Commissioner Harrison's questions.

Director Todd announced that the electronic outreach delivery is approximately 6,884 recipients for each of the public hearing notices to the public.

CEO Tammy Daniels, Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA), attended the meeting virtually and stated willingness to present a proposal to omit deed restrictions for side lots at the next meeting of Detroit Land Bank Authority Board of Directors.

Commissioner Daniels moved to waive same day action for this item, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

Commissioner Russell moved to accept Staff's recommendation. Also, he moved to include comments and concerns of Director Todd and CPC Staff giving them authority to be able to resolve any issues. Additionally, he moved to include communication to City Council that CPC wants the Detroit Land Bank Authority to remove deed restrictions from side lots, seconded by Commissioner Esparza.

There was a Roll Call Vote:

5 Yays - Daniels, Esparza, Harrison, Russell, and Udabe

1 Nay - Lewis

Motion Approved

Commissioners Lewis, Russell, and Esparza each expressed firmly a request that the Detroit Land Bank Authority remove deed restrictions from side lots.

IV. Public Comment – *This matter was called later in the meeting.*

JoAnn Warwick commented concerns regarding secret plans and unanswered emails sent to city officials and departments. She relayed concerns regarding Plan Detroit, Master Plan Advisory Group and community engagement.

V. Unfinished Business – *This matter was called earlier in the meeting and tabled to a future meeting per motion.*

- A.** Consideration of the request of Matthew Walters on behalf of the Goat Yard Marine, LLC (doing business as Detroit Boatworks) to rezone the properties at 2 St. Jean, 21 St. Jean, 95 St. Jean Street, and 140 Terminal Street, from PD (Planned Development) and M4 (Intensive Industrial) zoning classification to a B4 (General Business) zoning

classification (TS, KJ) 30 min

Commissioner Daniels moved to Table the Unfinished Business matter to the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

Commissioner Daniels moved to Table the Rest of the Meeting with the exception of Public Comment, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

VI. New Business – *This matter was tabled to a future meeting per motion.*

- A.** Request of Rock Economic Development Group for a minor modification of a PD (Planned Development) zoning district at the property commonly known as 1326 St. Antoine, generally bounded by St. Antoine, Clinton Avenue, I-375 Freeway and Macomb Street. **(KJ)** 15 min

VII. Staff Report – *This matter was tabled to a future meeting per motion.*

VIII. Member Report – *This matter was tabled to a future meeting per motion.*

IX. Communications – *This matter was tabled to a future meeting per motion.*

X. Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.