

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

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

City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES
November 6, 2025
5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett, David Esparza, Gwen Lewis, 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 June 5, 2025

Commissioner Bennett moved to approve the June 5, 2025 Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **5:15 PM PRESENTATION** – Request of W-Detroit Property, LLC for Site Plan Review of a development proposal on land zoned Special Development District, Riverfront Mixed Use (SD4) property commonly referred to as 240 Meldrum Street (aka 6000 E. Jefferson) for the WNBA Practice Facility to be situated upon approximately 7.2 acres of the former Uniroyal site (KJ) (**REQUESTING SAME DAY ACTION REQUESTED**) **45 min**

Present: Stefen Welch, Richard Haddad, Alicia Washeleski, Tony Rinner, Michael Marks, and Adam Patton
Brittney Hoszkiw, Mayor's Office
Kimani Jeffrey, CPC Staff

Kimani Jeffrey presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated September 29, 2025, the SD4 zoned site plan for 240 Meldrum Street. Mr. Jeffrey explained SD4 zoning classification requires City Council's approval of the site plan and elevations for mixed use in the Riverfront district, and the petitioners are requesting CPC same day action. The site plan is for a portion of 7.2 acres at 240 Meldrum Street for development of a WNBA practice facility. The petitioners are aware that this is a general site plan review and additional details and design require Staff evaluation.

Richard Haddad presented via PowerPoint that this site plan is the outcome of an awarded bid to bring Detroit a Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team launching in 2029. The WNBA practice facility will replicate the Detroit Pistons Performance Center. It is planned as a 75,000 square foot indoor facility with two surface parking lots (192 spaces total). The WNBA practice facility will have two basketball courts, office spaces, training areas, amenities, and it will serve as headquarters. Mr. Haddad stated they plan to hire Detroiters to work on the construction project and to work for the team in 2029. The objective of the project is to maximize pedestrian access and connect with the Riverwalk and Joe Louis Greenway. A traffic study was conducted to minimize the impact to traffic. Also, the project will revitalize a blighted site with a universal design and sustainability. A more defined detailed plan on the facility is forthcoming.

Further, Richard Haddad provided a foreglimpse and snapshot on the next phase of the development which will involve a nonprofit collaboration with the W-Detroit Property, LLC., for a youth development academy and recreational facility. For example, the planned youth development academy/recreational facility will serve and fulfill Detroit Public Schools Community District or Police Athletic League (PAL) needs for places for field teams and host tournaments. The envisioned development will be a community hub for youth and women sports, and a community event or gathering space.

Stefen Welch reviewed via PowerPoint a displayed list of the development team's community outreach. They have met with residents throughout the City and had positive conversations with neighborhood organizations, community groups, and charter schools.

Mr. Haddad responded that the land is owned by the City and the Detroit Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (DRBA). This statement was in response to Commissioner Esparza.

Mr. Haddad stated the project completion date is expected in early 2029 and WNBA season starts in May 2029.

Kimani Jeffrey stated that the developers will return with further site plans, elevations and next phases of the site's development. CPC Staff recommends approval of the site plan.

Commissioner Russell moved to accept staff recommendations as amended, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.

There was a Roll Call Vote:

6 Yays - Bennett, Esparza, Lewis, Harrison, Smith, and Udabe

0 Nay

Motion Unanimously Approved

IV. Public Comment –

Ms. Nina Strum commented on behalf of Ms. Gadda Bahoura due to language barrier. She commented concerns regarding a June 2024 rezoning request from Anthony Watts regarding Van Dyke and Edsel Ford Service Drive from B3 to B4. Ms. Bahoura is the owner of the Van Dyke Liquor Market at Harper and Van Dyke. The developer has not communicated with Ms. Bahoura regarding the rezoning.

CPC Staff will follow up with the commenter on this matter.

James Chandler commented his questions regarding the WNBA recreational facility on its difference, parking, draft/scholarships and inclusion of Detroiters.

Director Marcell Todd provided CPC's email address at CPC@detroitmi.gov, where the public may submit their comments and questions.

You matter-JoAnn Warwick commented her concerns regarding public hearings and violations of the City Charter. She read aloud City charter language. She mentioned concerns pertaining to the Lets Build More Housing, and Sixth General Text amendment.

Theresa Wells of Revive Detroit commented on the WNBA facility and whether this proposal is the best use of Riverfront land, community engagement, Pistons practice facility security, tax benefits and lease of property. She is opposed to the WNBA proposal.

Josh Elling, Director, Jefferson East commented support of the WNBA development and gratitude for the anticipated youth development academy.

Tyson Gersh commented his admiration for the City zoning ordinance, and stated his opinion on the Open Meetings Act and public comment.

V. Unfinished Business – (May be taken up earlier in the meeting as opportunity presents)

- A.** Consideration of the request of T. Van Fox (on behalf of MHT Housing, Inc.) and Tyler Hardy (on behalf of the Detroit Housing Commission) to modify the existing PD (Planned Development) zoning classification created by Ordinance No. 15-10 on Zoning District Map No. 40 the former Herman Gardens public housing site now known as Gardenvue Estates to allow for the construction of a new multi-family housing complex including 53 apartments and 120 townhomes **(TS) (ACTION REQUESTED) 30 min**

Present: Luke Willian, MHT Housing and Arthur Jemison, Detroit Housing Commission
Timarie DeBruhl, CPC Staff

Timarie DeBruhl presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated October 31, 2025, a request to modify an existing PD for Gardenvue Estates by Ordinance Number 15-10 to include two blocks of multi-housing for 72 townhomes and 57 apartments. The

site is located in District 7, and it is east of Southfield Freeway and north of Warren Avenue (map shown). The land is controlled by the Detroit Housing Commission (DHC). There is existing housing on the eastern part of the land, and this proposal will develop multi-unit housing on the vacant western portion. She provided a history of the rezoning and development of the site. Also, she reviewed the current zoning in the surrounding area. The Planning and Development Department (PDD) submitted an interpretation that the PD modification is generally consistent with the Master Plan future land use. She reviewed the questions and feedback made by CPC at the public hearing on September 4, 2025. It was noted that MHT Housing has a 94.4% current occupancy rate, 23 developments totaling 1,987 units, and nine developments under construction totaling 531 units in the City. Also, MHT Housing uses an average of 75%-85% Detroit based construction contractors for City projects and utilizes 20% women and minority owned businesses. Ms. DeBruhl reviewed the exterior design, CPC Staff analysis criteria, and the applicable conditions of the PD modification.

Luke Willian stated that the development team seriously considered CPC's suggestions and plan to increase the amount of landscape, trees, add uniqueness to each town home/building (renderings displayed), avoid cookie cutter style, and install fencing for resident's safety. He reviewed the other design modifications made due to CPC's feedback.

Ms. DeBruhl stated that CPC Staff recommends approval of this PD modification with conditions.

Commissioner Bennett moved to accept Staff's recommendation with conditions, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

VI. New Business –

A. Proposed CPC Meeting Schedule for 2026 (MT, WG) 15 min

Director Marcell Todd presented the 2026 proposed schedule of CPC meeting dates for consideration and advised that Commissioners prepare to vote at the December 4, 2025 meeting.

After discussion, Chairperson Smith stated July 16, 2026, and July 30, 2026 are preferred meeting dates.

VII. Staff Report –

Director Marcell Todd mentioned that due to a light agenda, Staff suggests cancelling the November 20, 2025 CPC meeting.

Commissioner Russell moved to cancel the November 20, 2025 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Bennett. Motion Approved.

Additionally, Director Marcell Todd invited a CPC representative to attend the Legislative Policy Division/CPC Staff orientation for City Council to be held on December 8, 2025, and December 9, 2025.

VIII. Member Report – Commissioner Smith expressed his pleasure in attending the annual Michigan Planning Conference on October 22-24, 2025. He announced the opportunity to participate in the

upcoming 2026 National Planning Conference on April 25-28, 2026, hosted in Detroit.

IX. Communications – There were no Communications.

X. Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.