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Rachel Udabe
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Adrian-Keith Bennett
Kenneth R. Daniels
David Esparza, AIA, LEED
Ritchie Harrison
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.

City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES
March 5, 2026
5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:23 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett, Kenneth Daniels, David Esparza (left at 6:48 pm), Ritchie Harrison, Frederick Russell, Donovan Smith, and Rachel Udabe

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

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

II. Meeting minutes

Meeting minutes of September 18, 2025

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

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. **5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – to consider the request of Junction McGraw LLC to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-47, District Map No. 45 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show an M2 (Restricted Industrial) zoning classification where R2 (Two-Family Residential) and B4 (General Business) zoning classifications are shown and to also show a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification where an R2 (Two-Family Residential) zoning classification is shown (**KJ, DPL**) **75 min**

Present: Kyle Morton, Ashley Capital / Latimer Ashley Development Group
Jean Belanger, Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC)
Jose Lemus, Jobs & Economy Team (JET)
Kimani Jeffrey and Dolores Perales-Lara, CPC Staff

Kimani Jeffrey, CPC Staff, presented via PowerPoint a rezoning request for development at Junction McGraw. He explained Latimer Ashley seeks to build a facility to attract mobility and light industrial operators for this 30-acre land. The site is bound by McGraw Avenue, West Warren Avenue, Edsel Ford Freeway (I-94) and 35th Street to the west. The developers propose construction of an approximately 400,000 sq ft building with speculative occupancy. The request is to rezone from R2 to M2. Mr. Jeffrey stated up-zonings are uncommon; however, this proposed development is appropriate due to the site's uniqueness, location, transit, accommodating space, and abundant support from thorough community engagement. Mr. Jeffrey displayed maps and explained that all of the parcels west of 31st Street are proposed to be rezoned to M2, and the parcels east of 31st Street are proposed to be rezoned to B4. He displayed a map showing the 15 parcels Latimer Ashley owns and the remaining parcels are publicly owned by the City and Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA). It was noted that Latimer Ashley plan to purchase the publicly owned parcels. Later, Mr. Jeffrey explained that this development requires a Master Plan amendment for light industrial which will be presented to CPC at a later time.

Kimani Jeffrey and Dolores Perales-Lara commended the Latimer Ashley Group for their gaining support through the community engagement process. It was noted that the development team responded to feedback swiftly and applied multiple modifications to the proposed site. In fact, they changed the originally requested rezoning M3 to B4 due to the community desiring a zoning designation that allows future potential commercial, housing, or mixed-use development.

Kyle Morton presented via PowerPoint the Junction McGraw project's site plan, renderings, photos, aerial views, and community engagement for the proposed rezoning. Mr. Morton provided a brief history of the Latimer Ashley collaboration, partnership with Detroit Economic Growth Corporation (DEGC) in October 2025, and Ashley Capital's experience with development of Brownfield sites. He explained that the building is speculative, and it is anticipated to attract occupants of a large national or international company. He mentioned that it is projected to offer approximately 400 jobs for the construction of the building. Mr. Morton showed photos of the modern Class A stock warehouse, parking, trailer and truck docks, storm water pond, buffering, and landscaping.

Jean Belanger discussed how the City sought out 20 acres of land to attract industrial to create employment centers for Detroiters. She provided examples of how this development scheme has been successful in light industrial, such as, former Kettering High School now Dakota Integrated Systems employs Detroiters. Therefore, this location at Junction McGraw has the same employment center goal.

Kyle Morton discussed there have been five months of continuous progressive community engagement. He explained that although the first meeting was met with much opposition, things changed after receiving feedback/concerns and modifications were made to site plan. Mr. Morton highlighted some of the revisions achieved, adding a new walkway (westside) mainly for students to traverse to three area schools, setbacks, landscape, and truck routes. Also, the Latimer Ashley's renovated construction office (formerly Sam's Pharmacy, West Warren) will be donated to an organization to utilize as a community space. A sixth community meeting is planned.

Mr. Morton discussed that the feedback received at the initial CPC presentation inspired the development team to analyze or include sustainability, storm water management (reuse water), EV chargers, bike racks, and patios.

Mr. Morton explained the timeline for construction to begin spring 2027 and completed in 2028. The cost is \$40-\$50 million for the project. This was in response to Commissioner Esparza's questions.

Mr. Morton responded that the facility will be flexible and able to house four tenants. This avoids building something that is obsolete. It will be renovated depending on the tenant. This was in response to Commissioner Daniels' questions.

Mr. Morton responded that they would pursue a Brownfield 381 TIF (Michigan tax increment financing) through DEGC due to excavation. This was in response to Commissioner Daniels' questions.

Public Testimony

Ethelyn Carroll, President of the United Block Club Council, commented concerns on the area being narrow and cut off of Junction. She stated that Latimer Ashley has been working with the community. She mentioned concerns on environmental issues, bus rerouting, commercial buildings, letters of support, and next community meeting. She requested that CPC make no decision today.

Keith Jennings commented that he wants a copy of the presentation regarding the Junction McGraw project.

Kimani Jeffrey responded that the presentation will be posted on the CPC website for public access.

Madeline Franco commented concerns on residents' health and the environmental impact of the site, increase of pollutants, warehouses, loading docks, and community benefits agreement.

Rose Liggins commented that she would like to know about the development and any further development in the area.

Kyle Morton responded that an environmental report was generated, and the building was setback farther and landscaping added. They are trying to mitigate environmental impact. This project does not qualify for a community benefits agreement, and there has been an informal process and adding of amenities.

CPC Chairperson Smith stated on the record CPC received a letter of opposition from resident, Ms. Green.

Kimani Jeffrey acknowledged that CPC received two letters in opposition regarding the closing of the bridge.

Mr. Jeffrey stated Staff recommends approval of this rezoning.

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve this item, seconded by Commissioner Esparza

There was a Roll Call vote:

Bennett, Daniels, Esparza, Harrison, Russell, Smith and Udabe
7 yays/Unanimous Approval

B. 6:30 PM DISCUSSION – Zoning Preemption Michigan House Bills 5529-5532 and 5581-5585 (JM, TD) 30 min

Present: Timarie DeBruhl and Rory Bolger, CPC Staff
Jennifer Rigterink, Michigan Municipal League (MML)

Director Marcell Todd discussed the new proposed house bills regarding changes to housing development and affordable housing in the State. This is an issue to monitor and address since it suggests a one size fits all solution for each Michigan community. Also, City Council Member Scott Benson requested a development resolution opposing these bills.

Timarie DeBruhl presented via PowerPoint a brief overview of the introduced bills and how, if implemented, these new bills would change the City's zoning code. She detailed the proposed changes in land division, lot size, setback size minimums, and dwelling size minimums in R1 and R2. For example, currently the City's zoning code does not have a dwelling size minimum, but the bill proposes 500 square feet minimum. Additionally, the proposed bills would change the requirements for protest petitions, parking minimums, mobile homes and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). She stated that site plan review requirement would have a 60-day time limit.

Ms. DeBruhl described the alternative Bills that have been introduced supported by the Michigan Municipal League, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and State elected officials. The bills work with local governments and may address Detroit's housing shortage and affordable housing by creating 10,000 new or rehabilitated homes. It streamlines approvals allowing more varied housing types. She described some of the details of the proposed programs, MI Home Program: Partnership over preemption.

Jennifer Rigterink of Michigan Municipal League (MML) stated that the proposed bills are not flexible, and the local governments are not being included. She mentioned that parking and dwellings are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and may be updated when necessary. She advised that costs, infrastructure, public safety, flexibility, and affordability are factors to be considered. The proposed housing bills and preemption bills are in the Michigan House Government Operations Committee, and there will be a hearing on the preemption bills. The letter of opposition has more than 1,800 local officials' signatures.

Dr. Rory Bolger discussed that Michigan Association of Planning (MAP) and MML are in different positions on the bills. MAP expressed qualified support for most of the preemption bills. MAP's stand on housing is that it is an issue of greater than local concern. They recognized that there are municipalities like Detroit that are open to various types of housing. On the other hand, he explained that there are other municipalities that are not open to various types of housing, and these municipalities have provisions in the zoning ordinance or elsewhere that make it difficult or unlikely for lower cost housing to be built and for denser housing to be established. MAP stated there are some conditions or portions that need to be added or changed. This information is helpful as CPC and Staff analyze this issue.

Jennifer Rigterink responded that these Bills are supported by Home Builders Association of

Michigan, Abundant Housing of Michigan, Mackinaw Center and Americans For Prosperity (AFP). This was in response to Commissioner Daniels' question.

Director Todd stated that in conjunction with City Council Member Scott Benson's request Staff seeks direction and authority to represent CPC within City government and the State legislature via verbal or written testimony.

Note: Commissioner Esparza left the meeting at 6:48 p.m. prior to the vote on this matter.

Commissioner Harrison moved to follow Director Todd's request for support in following this matter and representing CPC in this matter and providing updates so that CPC can stay apprised of this matter and take further action if necessary. Also, Commissioner Harrison moved that the letter is shared with the public bodies mentioned City Council, Mayor, State Legislature, and Governor's office seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

There was a Roll Call vote:

Bennett, Daniels, Harrison, Russell, Smith, and Udabe

6 yays/Unanimous Approval

C. 7:00 PM DISCUSSION – Plan Data Center Regulation (EF) 30 min

Director Todd stated that the issue of data centers in Detroit has prompted discussions in City Council. City Council Member Benson has weighed in on potential regulations for Detroit. He has submitted requests for Legislative Policy Division (LPD) to prepare a request for a moratorium on this issue. A moratorium will allow time to examine the City's infrastructure, analyze the ability to support data centers, determine necessary regulations, and gauge residents' desires and concerns regarding data centers.

Eric Fazzini presented via PowerPoint the matter regarding plan data center regulation. He explained that data centers house technology equipment, and activities that drive data centers expansion are cloud computing, crypto currency, and artificial intelligence (ai). Currently, there may be a target to build data centers in the Midwest due to more favorable environment and water resources. He explained that hyperscale is controversial since it has a minimum of 5,000 servers or 10,000 square feet, and high demand for power and/or water. Also, it's controversial since it involves development pressure, transparency, and local officials being asked to sign nondisclosure agreement, minimum public engagement, lack of Master Plan amendments, zoning uses, and spot zoning concerns. Some Michigan municipalities or townships have approved a moratorium to pause applications for data centers and allow time to address and reevaluate the uses for data centers. Ultimately, the goal is to complete a viable text amendment utilizing University of Michigan, Michigan State University and other agencies as resources for gathering input on regulations for this emerging use.

Commissioner Bennett moved to support a yearlong moratorium, with Law Department's approval, to be put in place for data centers to allow Staff to research and determine what zoning ordinance can be done regarding this usage of land, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

IV. Public Comment –

James McBroom commented support and opinion on the legislative package and new proposed house bills.

Rose Jones commented gratitude for MML participation in the meeting, commended CPC's Commissioners and mentioned the Michigan Home Program.

V. Unfinished Business – There was no Unfinished Business.

VI. New Business – There was no New Business.

VII. Staff Report – Later, Director Todd announced that the City's budget hearing season will begin with the Mayor on March 9, 2026. Thereafter, the City's 40 or more department budget hearings start on Wednesday, March 11, 2026.

VIII. Committee Reports – There were no Committee Reports.

IX. Member Report – There were no Member Reports.

X. Communications – There were no Communications.

XI. Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.