

**Donovan Smith, AICP**  
Chairperson  
**Rachel Udabe**  
Vice Chair/Secretary

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

**City of Detroit**  
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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**  
**May 7, 2026**  
**5:00 P.M.**

### **I. Opening**

**A.** Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**B.** Roll Call

Attendees: David Esparza, 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 Russell.**  
**Motion Approved.**

### **II. Meeting minutes**

Meeting minutes of November 6, 2025.

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

### **III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations**

**A. 5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – To consider proposed map amendment to Chapter 50, *Zoning*, Article XVII, Section 50-17-33, Map No. 31, to replace the existing PD (Planned Development) zoning classification at 101 Lenox and 319 Lenox Avenue, the authorization for which has lapsed, with a new PD and site plan for a luxury housing development previously approved in 2007. **(CG, MT)** **45 min**

Present: Curtis Jordan, John Biggar, and Robert Bryan of Lenox Estates  
Chris Gulock, CPC Staff

Deputy Director Chris Gulock presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated May 6, 2026, the request to update a lapsed PD and site plan approval of 101 Lenox and 319 Lenox Avenue. The site is located in southeast Detroit, Jefferson-Chalmers area (map shown). It is bounded by the Detroit River on the south, Starboard Lagoon on the west and the former historic Fisher Mansion on the north. The land is 16.2 acres, owned and controlled by Jerome Morgan of Morgan Development, LLC. Additionally, this request includes a smaller piece of land at 1.5 acres owned by City of Detroit Parks and Recreation Department located west of the Alfred Brush Ford Park (AB Park). The entire site is zoned PD. He showed the area of the map displaying the site, the Detroit River and Starboard Lagoon and surrounding zoning of the area. Deputy Director Gulock described the history of the land, and its various zoning classifications, Jefferson-Chalmers urban renewal area, and how the City prioritized and attempted to market this land for residential development.

Deputy Director Gulock emphasized an important time between 2006-2007 when the City sold the entire parcel from Lenox to the Starboard Lagoon (17.7 acres) to Jerome Morgan for redevelopment. A development agreement existed between Mr. Morgan and the City and it was proposed as 18 residential units subject to five conditions. For example, a condition pertaining to preservation of the habitat for wildlife and plant life in the special area. Construction began for six foundations but stalled during the 2008 economic downturn. There have been delays over 15 years including legal disputes in 2018. After the court's decision, the City provided a quit claim deed to 101 Lenox to Jerome Morgan, and the City retained part of the land at the south of the property. It appeared Mr. Morgan installed the fence surrounding the site as required by the City. After 2022, the project moved forward; however, the PD expired and it needs to be reapproved for the newly revised development plan to proceed.

Deputy Director Gulock described the modified plans will include 16 luxury homes with circular driveways, new seawall, dredging the lagoon, landscaping, and new sidewalks (diagrams shown). He explained that the project is not within the flood plain per Federal maps; however, the southern part may be in the flood plain. It was noted that the Planning and Development Department (PDD) interprets that this rezoning and development is inconsistent with the Master Plan due to the Parks and Recreation District (PRD) designation. Staff will discuss the complexities of the urban renewal plan and Master Plan involving this site with the Law Department.

Deputy Director Gulock discussed community engagement for the project. The development team reached out to the neighborhood and drafted a one-page letter/flyer summarizing the project and contact information. It was distributed by placing the flyer in the doors of 26 houses on the east side of Lenox. Also, CPC public hearing notices were sent out to 300 taxpayers of record within 300 feet from the project. They met with Jocelyn Harris, Chairperson of District 4 Community Advisory Council and Jay Juergensen of the Jefferson-Chalmers Water Project. There was an April 17, 2026, zoom meeting with Jefferson-Chalmers Water Project and Council Member Latisha Johnson where Curtis Jordan and Deputy Director Gulock attended and explained the project. There was some community support. Additionally, the developers reached out to Shorepointe Village Association via a zoom meeting and addressed questions and concerns.

Robert Bryan, Builder, responded that this development will be high-end homes and a showplace area. The homes are estimated at \$1.5 million. This was in response to Commissioner Udabe's questions.

Curtis Jordan stated that they have created relationships with the general public and maintained a quality relationship. They have extended employment to community members. This statement was in response to Commissioner Udabe.

Director Marcell Todd provided additional history and insight on Jerome Morgan and the City of Detroit desiring higher density in that area. He mentioned that affordable housing is needed city-wide, and the City also recognizes the desire or for this type of high-end housing on the market.

### Public Testimony

Faith Sorrell commented in support for the Lenox Estates project. Ms. Sorrell stated concerns about development on the land, increasing property taxable value. She mentioned that a new development may deter community trespassing. She appreciates the AB Park.

Robert Swafford commented not in support for the Lenox Estates project. He does not want his home facing a fence. He feels the developer disregards the preservation of the natural habitat, and mentioned tax matters and defiance of agreement.

Nick Stoudemire commented indifferent support and viewpoint of the project. He's concerned with PD not being zoned as residential. He stated concerns on the wellness of the water, habitat, and environment, and future private negotiations for financial gain.

Pam Rogers commented regarding the AB Park and community center and how her home view is a parking lot. She inquired on the City-owned parcel and its planned use. She discussed youth loitering and disturbance.

Ida Yapa commented her concerns on the size of the new homes. She stated that she enjoys viewing sunrises from her home and the new development plans of massive sized homes will block her daily view. She requested that officials limit the size of the homes.

Anthony Adams commented since the community's meeting with the developer, they are still waiting for documentation to be sent. He stated concerns on the dumped back fill material, clearing spoil being stored on the site since it is unsightly to residents. dredging of the canal and the massive size of the homes.

Mark Smith commented his concerns with Lenox properties, wildlife preservations, sunrises, trees, and he stated that four-story homes in the community are ill placed.

Director Todd explained that a Master Plan amendment may be needed for this project, and the items involving this project will need further review. When this item returns before CPC, there will be further clarification and inclusion in the next CPC report.

Commissioner Harrison emphasized, since there has been so much time elapsed, the need for more extensive community engagement to enable the community to have a fair view of the project.

- B. 6:00 PM PUBLIC HEARING** – To consider the request of Nathan Harvey, with Detroit Architect LLC, on behalf of property owner Michael Johnigan, with Platinum Affair Event Hall, LLC, in conjunction with the Detroit City Planning Commission as co-petitioner to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-38, District Map No. 36 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification where a

B3 (Shopping District) zoning classification is shown at 11426 Kelly and 11440 Kelly Road. The properties are generally located on the east side of Kelly Road between Courville Street and Stockwell Street. The proposed rezoning area is indicated the accompanying map. The proposed map amendment is being requested to allow the applicant to redevelop the vacant building at 11426 Kelly Road as a rental hall. 11440 Kelly Road is a small City-owned vacant corner lot adjacent to the proposed redevelopment. (EF) 45 min

Present: Nathan Harvey, Detroit Architect, LLC

Eric Fazzini, CPC Staff

*Director Marcell Todd stated a disclaimer on the record that he and the petitioner, Nathan Harvey are longtime associates, but their relationship is not professional nor financial.*

Eric Fazzini presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated May 6, 2026, a request to rezone from B3 to B4. The site is located in District 4, Outer Drive-Hayes Neighborhood. He explained that Denby High School is to the north, and there is frontage on Kelly Road where Kelly splits from Hayes heading northeast (map shown). The main parcel is the building, and the second is a City-owned parcel, sliver of grass, along Stockwell. CPC joined as co-petitioner to ensure zoning consistency of the entire block, and to designate zoning for the small patch of land likely undevelopable on its own. He reviewed the surrounding zoning of the area. It was noted that the Planning and Development Department submitted an interpretation stating that the rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan. He showed current photos of the vacant building (formerly church or retail), entrance and exit to the site. Further, Mr. Fazzini acknowledged that the proposed development would need variance approval since it has a deficiency of the 100 required parking spaces for a rental hall. Currently, they have a deficiency of 88 parking spaces. It is necessary for the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED) to consider conditional use applicable to rental halls and review the site's floor plan.

Nate Harvey stated that the developers are prepared to pursue approval for a variance for the deficient parking and file a petition since there are single family residences nearby.

#### Public Testimony

Keisha, President of Haverhill Block Club, commented concerns on the rezoning resulting in a strip club use.

Nate Harvey responded that this will be a rental hall. It is planned to install screening to mitigate noise and impact so not to disturb the neighborhood.

Eric Fazzini stated that this matter will return to CPC at a later time.

#### **IV. Public Comment –**

Randy Holloway commented on his business and his community efforts. He explained his aspirations to contract with the City and proposals offering youths after school activities or jobs. He is currently awaiting a response from City officials.

Commissioner Smith expressed gratitude to Mr. Holloway and stated that CPC has a finite prevue. He encouraged Mr. Holloway to reach out to City Council districts for further assistance.

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

**VI. New Business** – There was no New Business.

**VII. Staff Report** – Director Todd stated that due to the 2026 Grand Prix and limited building access, CPC Staff request direction to find an alternate off-site meeting location.

**Commissioner Russell moved to direct Staff find an alternative place for all the meetings that occur during the Grand Prix and their setup and takedown, seconded by Commissioner Harrison. Motion Approved.**

Director Todd announced the opportunity to participate in a special workshop hosted by the Planning and Development Department (PDD) for Plan Detroit for a training session on the Master Plan amendment for the CPC. It will be open to the public and streamed. He asked for Commissioners' future availability.

Timarie DeBruhl presented a brief description of an upcoming Parkstone Partners rezoning request from R2 to M3 or PD. This rezoning will permit the existence of a small-scale customer vehicle fabrication and classic vehicle restoration combined shop. The site is located at Putnam Street, east of Grand River, south of Interstate 94 (I-94) and north of Warren Avenue in the Woodbridge neighborhood. Although these sites were historically zoned R2, they have been occupied by manufacturing or industrial uses for 60 years. This site at 5130 14<sup>th</sup> Street is approximately 49,000 square feet, and its permanent use is a permitted legal nonconforming use as a tow yard not permitted in R2. Also, the site at 2150 Putnam is used for parking and vehicle storage by the tow yard. It is fenced in with the other parcel. The tow yard is 1,000 square feet and owned by the Detroit Land Bank Authority. She explained to CPC that the original request is for 14<sup>th</sup> Street to be rezoned from R2 to M3; however, after further review of the petition, Staff is exploring the option to rezone to a PD. She explained the proposed use has been deemed by BSEED as high medium impact and manufacturing or processing. Ms. DeBruhl announced an upcoming public hearing on May 21, 2026.

Director Todd mentioned it is anticipated that there will be new individuals appointed as CPC Commissioners, and new officers for CPC Committees.

**VIII. Committee Reports** – There were no Committee Reports.

**IX. Member Report** – Commissioner Rachel Udabe announced her resignation from the City Planning Commission.

All Commissioners personally conveyed sentiments and gratitude for her service.

**X. Communications** – There were no Committee Reports.

**XI. Adjournment** –

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.