

# City of Detroit

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**TO:** City Planning Commission

**FROM:** Kimani Jeffrey, Staff

**RE:** Request of to consider the request of Parkstone Development Partners on behalf of Selden Innovation Center, LLC , to amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, by amending Article XVII, *Zoning District Maps*, Section 50-17-4, *District Map No. 3*, of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance to show a SD2 (Special Development District, Mixed-Use) zoning classification where SD1 (Special Development District, Small Scale, Mixed-Use), R2 (Two-Family Residential District), and PD (Planned Development District) zoning classifications are currently shown for the properties commonly known as 950 Selden Street, 924-974 Frank Street, and 937-955 West Alexandrine Street. The location of the proposed map amendment is indicated on the accompanying map.

The petitioner is proposing to redevelop the former Jefferson School into a shared artist studio and office building, and develop the lots north of the former school on Frank and West Alexandrine Streets for surface parking.

**DATE:** September 21, 2020

Before the City Planning Commission (CPC) is the request of Parkstone Development Partners on behalf of Selden Innovation Center, LLC to amend the Detroit Zoning Ordinance to show a SD2 (Special Development District, Mixed-Use) zoning classification where SD1 (Special Development District, Small Scale, Mixed-Use), R2 (Two-Family Residential District), and PD (Planned Development District) zoning classifications are currently shown for the properties commonly known as 950 Selden Street, 924-974 Frank Street, and 937-955 West Alexandrine Street. The location of the proposed map amendment is indicated on the accompanying map.

The petitioner is proposing to redevelop the former Jefferson School at 950 Selden into a shared artist studio and office building, and develop the lots north of the former school on Frank and West Alexandrine Streets for surface parking.



Image from Industry Detroit presentation

## PROPOSAL

The project entails the redevelopment of the building that is the former Jefferson School. The development team consists of Invest Detroit, Midtown Detroit Inc and QFactor. The development team seeks to renovate the building into a shared artist studio and office building that will be a workplace for “social impact businesses and organizations”. The social impact focus will be geared towards “businesses led by women, immigrants and people of color, small businesses, professional offices, creative services, entrepreneurs, artists, and food and beverage services.” Amenities will include an event center, training room, café, and conference rooms. Furthermore, the plan proposes to vacate Frank Street and the alley immediately to the north for the purpose of creating a plaza and combining spaces.

Combined, the subject site is inclusive of the school, a parking lot, and a sculpture garden totaling approximately 2.5 acres. The subject properties for the full scope of the development are 950 Selden Street, 924-974 Frank Street, and 937-955 West Alexandrine Street. The properties located at 937-955 W. Alexandrine Street are owned by Robert Sestok who has entered into a purchase agreement with Selden Innovation Center, LLC, the owner/developer of Jefferson School and the other subject parcels. A letter giving permission to rezone the properties has been submitted by the owner.

The project will transform 110,000 square feet (sf) of what currently exists as a school at 950 Selden into artist studios and office space. Of this, 20,000 sf will be reserved for “mission driven businesses and education to career pathways.”

The unimproved properties commonly known as 924, 940, 946, 960, 968, & 974 Frank will be redeveloped into a 114 stall surface parking lot. Forty-seven parking spaces are slated to be located at the current City Sculpture Park (which is relocating) to serve as an accessory use to the Jefferson School building.

The rezoning is being proposed in order to allow for more flexibility in the range of uses that are permitted. The request is also planned in order to allow for more surface parking and a future mixed-use parking deck to eventually replace the surface parking lots.

## Proposed Parcel Rezoning & Vacations

### Jefferson School

- Currently SD1
- Proposed Zoning: SD2

### Frank St. Parking Lot Parcels (6 total)

- Currently R2
- Proposed Zoning: SD2
- Lot combination request

### Future Parking Lot

- Currently PD
- Proposed Zoning: SD2

### Frank St. Proposed R.O.W. Vacation

- North-south alley along 4<sup>th</sup> St remains open
- Proposed pedestrian plaza concept

### Proposed East-West Alley Vacation

- Alley between lots to be vacated
- 114 car total parking capacity

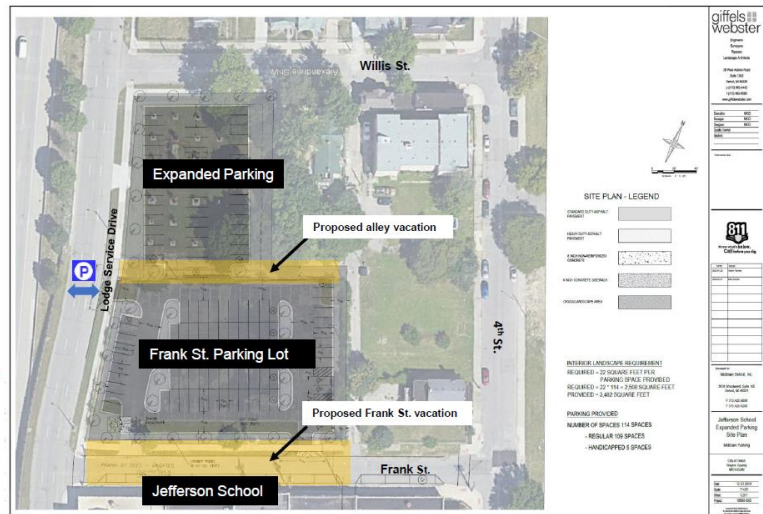


Image from Industry Detroit presentation

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

The zoning classification and land uses surrounding the subject area are as follows:

**North:** R2 & PD; residential homes, sculpture garden and surface parking

**South:** SD2; Midtown West site (former Wigle site)

**East:** R2; Residential homes

**West:** John C. Lodge Freeway

### Master Plan Consistency

The subject site is located within the Lower Woodward area of Neighborhood Cluster 4 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies (MP). The Future Land Use map for this area shows *Mixed-Residential Commercial (MRC)*. According to the MP, MRC areas consist predominantly of medium-to-high density housing developed compatibly with commercial and/or institutional uses. This classification is well suited to areas proximal to existing centers of major commercial activity, major thoroughfares, transportation nodes, or gateways into the city.

The Master Plan-Zoning Table which identifies the correlation between MP designations and zoning districts, classifies the SD2 zoning district as consistent with the MRC designation.

The Planning and Development Department (PDD) has been requested to provide a Master Plan interpretation.

### **Zoning**

Jefferson School at 950 Selden is currently zoned SD1 while the sculpture garden at 937, 945, 953 and 955 West Alexandrine is zoned PD and remaining parcels 924, 940, 946, 960, 968 and 974 Frank are zoned R2. Under the current R2, PD, and SD1 zoning districts the proposed uses, “parking lot/parking area”, “office” and “art studio” uses would require a conditional land use hearing, or in the case of the PD zoned land, would be prohibited as the proposal is not consistent with the approved PD plan. However, if the subject properties are rezoned to an SD2 district, all uses will be permitted on a by-right basis.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

In keeping with the City’s current strategy for public hearings and community meetings since COVID-19, the project team held two virtual sessions to share the project vision, inviting public feedback and refining the project in response to input received. The first session emphasized the overarching vision for the project along with preliminary concept drawings to describe the development team’s approach for the adaptive reuse of the former Jefferson School. The session was recorded and made available to those unable to attend at the time of the meeting.

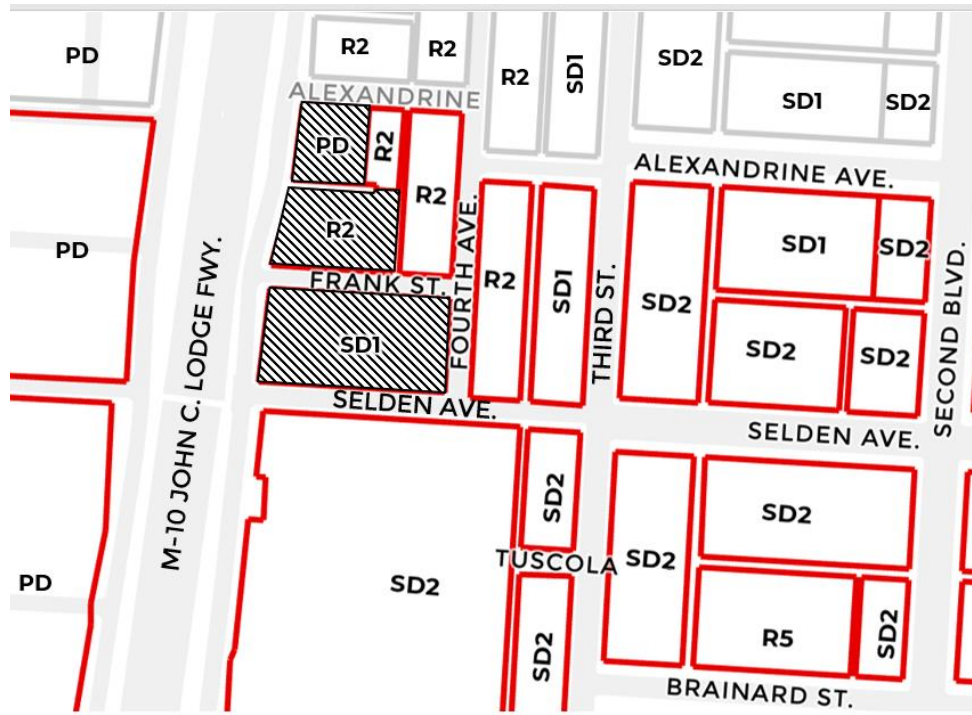
A mailing inviting community members to the virtual meetings was sent to all residences within ¼ mile of the project site. A project survey seeking public comment on project content was also distributed. Additionally, printed presentations were provided to the public.

During the public engagement, some of the issues/questions that were raised included topics such as metered parking, residential parking permitting implementation, marketability of spaces post COVID-19, office space feasibility market analyses, channels of communication throughout the life of the project, and approval/construction timelines.

The developer and CPC staff can provide more information on responses that were given to these questions/concerns at the September 24<sup>th</sup> public hearing for this matter.

Attachment:  
Plans

Cc: Katie Trudeau, Deputy Director P&DD  
Karen Gage, P&DD  
Esther Yang, P&DD  
Greg Moots, P&DD  
Lawrence Garcia, Corp. Counsel  
Arthur Jemison, Chief of Services and Infrastructure



**Proposed R2 and PD to SD2 Rezoning Site**