

# City of Detroit

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**TO:** City Planning Commission

**FROM:** Kimani Jeffrey, Staff

**RE:** Request of Brian Hurttienne, to amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, by amending Article XVII, *Zoning District Maps*, Section 50-17-31, *District Map No. 29*, of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance to show an R3 (Low Density Residential District) zoning classification where an R2 (Two-Family Residential District) zoning classification is currently shown for the properties commonly known as 7631 E. Lafayette Street, and, 1000 and 1008 Townsend Street in order to develop multiple-family dwellings (**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**).

**DATE:** September 21, 2020

## **PROPOSAL AND PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS**

On September 10, 2020, the City Planning Commission (CPC) heard the request of Brian Hurttienne, in conjunction with the property owner John Chu, to amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, by amending Article XVII, *Zoning District Maps*, Section 50-17-31, *District Map No. 29*, of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance to show an R3 (Low Density Residential District) zoning classification where an R2 (Two-Family Residential District) zoning classification is currently shown for the properties commonly known as 7631 E. Lafayette Street, and, 1000 and 1008 Townsend Street in order to develop multiple-family dwellings on the subject parcels.

The site is located in the Islandview neighborhood on E. Lafayette Avenue between Townsend and Baldwin Streets. The development team is proposing to rezone the subject parcels that combined are approximately .39 acre. The East Lafayette Apartments, as it is currently branded, is a two- building development. The project has 12 studio apartments and 12 one-bedroom apartments.

At the public hearing of September 10, 2020, the CPC heard a presentation on the subject proposal and put forward several questions that were answered by the petitioner. No members of the public spoke in opposition or in favor of the proposal. However, there was one letter of opposition submitted to CPC staff by a nearby resident of the site. This letter was read at the public hearing in opposition to the density, building typology and design, proposed parking count, and other aspects of the project. There were also 54 letters of general support for this and other Island View Greater Villages (IVGV) projects. Staff provided these letters at the public hearing.

## APPROVAL CRITERIA

Pursuant to Sec. 50-3-70 Approval Criteria, a recommendations and decisions on an amendment of a zoning map in Article XVII of chapter 50 of City Code are based on consideration of all of the following criteria:

(1) *Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend or fact;*

The proposed amendment meets the challenge of a transition in housing market desires. The amendment will allow for a <sup>1</sup>missing middle housing type that would not be allowed but for the rezoning.

(2) *Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Master Plan and the stated purposes of this Zoning Ordinance;*

The Future Land Use map for this area shows *Low/Medium - Density Residential (RLM)*. According to the Master Plan (MP), these areas should have an overall density of 8 to 16 dwelling units per net residential acre. The areas are often characterized by two- or four- family homes with small yards, on-street parking, or garages with alley access.

The Master Plan-Zoning Table which identifies the correlation between MP designations and zoning districts, classifies the R3 zoning district as consistent with the RLM designation.

(3) *Whether the proposed amendment will protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the public;*

The proposed amendment will be in alignment with the Master Plan of Policies and subject to the protections of the Zoning Ordinance and thus protects the health, safety and welfare of the public.

(4) *Whether the City and other service providers will be able to provide adequate public facilities and services to the subject property, while maintaining adequate levels of service to existing development;*

Adequate public facilities and services have been considered during the process for this proposal and there are no foreseen difficulties in providing necessary services.

(5) *Whether the proposed rezoning will have significant adverse impacts on the natural environment, including air, water, soil, wildlife, and vegetation and with respect to anticipated changes in noise and regarding stormwater management;*

The proposed rezoning is not expected to have any significant adverse impacts on the natural environment.

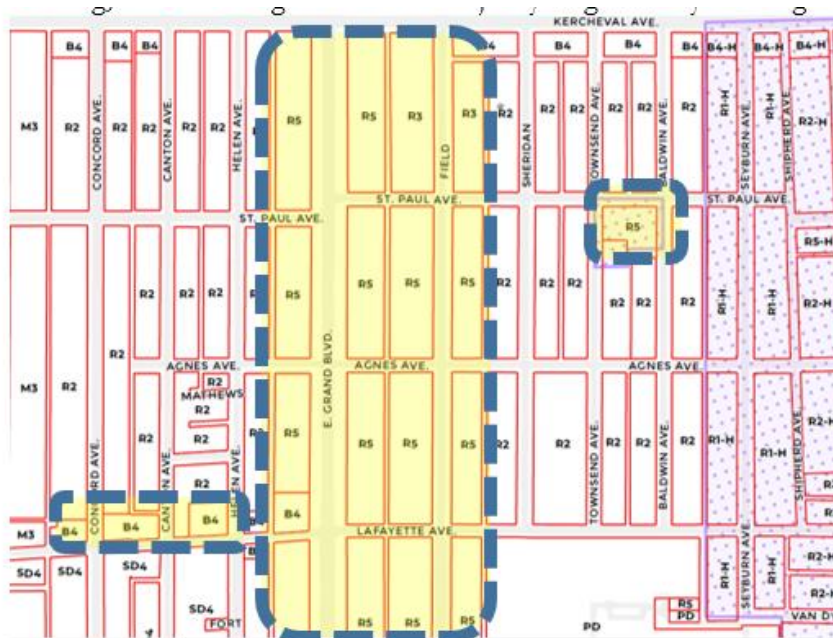
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<sup>1</sup> Missing Middle is a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living. These types provide diverse housing options along a spectrum of affordability, including duplexes, fourplexes, and bungalow courts, to support walkable communities, locally-serving retail, and public transportation options. Missing Middle Housing provides a solution to the mismatch between the available U.S. housing stock and shifting demographics combined with the growing demand for walkability as defined by Opticos Design.

(6) *Whether the proposed amendment will have significant adverse impacts on other property that is in the vicinity of the subject tract;*

The proposed amendment is not expected to have any significant adverse impacts on other properties in the vicinity of the subject site. The area's zoning consists of a mixture of predominantly R2 zoned parcels, but also has a blend of R3, R5 (Medium Density Residential District), and B4 (General Business District) zoned parcels. The zoning map below shows that the B4 parcels are predominantly along Kercheval Avenue and on E. Lafayette Ave., west of E. Grand Boulevard. The R5 parcels (which are designed to provide for a range of single-family to medium-density multiple-family dwellings) are located along E. Grand Boulevard and E. Lafayette, while a couple of R3 zoned blocks are located on Field Street. This shows that the subject neighborhood area is currently zoned for a mix of housing types as well as business activity.

One opposing argument has been made that the character and integrity of the neighborhood would be impacted by the proposed multiple family housing, since the neighborhood is majority single-family housing. However, there is currently existing examples of higher intensity residential districts in the neighborhood that allow for multi-family housing. Staff is of the opinion that the proposed amendment will not have significant adverse impacts on property in the vicinity, as this change does not constitute a major departure from what is currently allowable in the neighborhood.



(7) *The suitability of the subject property for the existing zoning classification and proposed zoning classification; and*

The property lies on a secondary thoroughfare, (shorter, narrower streets in comparison to major thoroughfares, designed to move traffic safely and expeditiously through residential areas.) The property is seemingly suitable for the subject classification since it is on the edge of the block and on a thoroughfare that can sustain denser development. The parcels zoned B4 General

Business district along Lafayette and Kercheval Avenues indicate that a more intensive zoning classification can exist cohesively on this thoroughfare.

(8) *Whether the proposed rezoning will create an illegal “spot zone.”*

Staff is of the opinion that this rezoning will not create an illegal spot zone because the proposal is consistent with the master plan and the subject site would remain a residential zoning classification which is compatible with surrounding zoning.

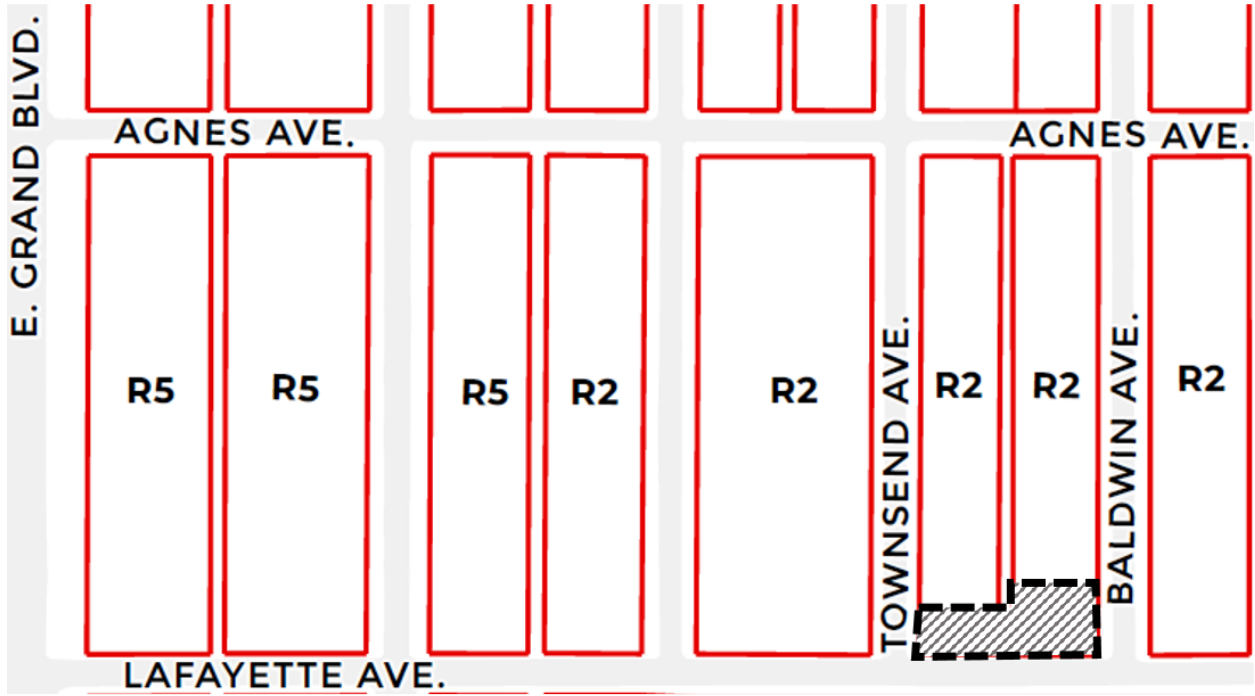
#### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed rezoning is appropriate in CPC staff’s opinion. It is not expected to have any adverse impacts on the surrounding area, but very well may allow for more affordable alternatives for varying lifestyles to take part in this neighborhood. There is also seemingly a wealth of support for the proposed rezoning based upon the groups that were engaged and the 54 support letters that were submitted.

Based on the aforementioned criteria in this and staff’s previous report dated September 8, 2020, CPC staff recommends approval of the proposed map amendment that is before this Honorable Body.

Attachment:  
Plans

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



**Proposed R2 to R3 Rezoning Site**