

Alton James
Chairperson
Lauren Hood, MCD
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
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

Brenda Goss Andrews
Damion W. Ellis
David Esparza, AIA, LEED
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.
Donovan Smith
Angy Webb
Henry Williams

TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Kimani Jeffrey, Staff

RE: Request of CCA Midtown Detroit, LLC to amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Zoning, by amending Article XVII, Zoning District Maps, Section 50-17-5. District Map No. 4, of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance to modify the development regulations of the existing PD (Planned Development District) zoning classification for the properties commonly identified as 33 Elliot Street, and 3510, 3524 and 3540 Woodward Avenue at the southeast corner of Mack and Woodward Avenues.

DATE: February 1, 2021

BACKGROUND

City Club Apartments (CCA) is a property owner and operator in the city of Detroit, founded by Jonathan Holtzman in 2016. The developer currently has numerous mixed-use developments in Detroit and surrounding communities. CCA's predecessor companies, Joseph Holtzman Homes, Holtsman and Silverman, and Village Green established the the family of companies now celebrating 100 years of being in operation. Other Detroit developments under its umbrella include City Club Apartments CBD Detroit (313 Park Avenue), City Club Apartments Lafayette Park (750 Chene Drive), Renaissance City Club Apartments (former Millinder Center), and Detroit City Club Apartments (1431 Washington Blvd). The firm also owns and operates several residential projects throughout Michigan and manages more than 10,000 housing units across multiple states.

PROPOSAL

The project that is currently before the City Planning Commission (CPC) is the proposal of CCA to develop City Club Apartments-Midtown on the approximately 2.4 acre site on the southeast corner of Mack and Woodward avenues. The development is part of the Red Cross site master plan bounded by Mack Avenue, the former Red Cross building, Woodward Avenue, and the reinstated, privately owned extension of Eliot Street. A portion of the site is utilized for parking with the remainder of the site being vacant.

The project under consideration is a mixed-use development that will include three separate buildings designed to exist cohesively with each other. The buildings are comprised of the following:

- 32,000 square foot (SF) single story retail building
- 64,000 SF six story mixed-use building with 12,500 SF of ground floor retail and 77 apartments

- 203,000 SF sixteen story apartment building with 273 apartments

Within the three buildings, there is a proposed mix of one-bedroom, two-bedroom, three-bedroom, studio, convertible, townhouse and penthouse units. Of the total amount of units, 20% will be set aside as affordable.

The retail space that is planned for the site will host a national retail anchor to occupy approximately 31,000 SF. Another 4,000 SF is planned for a national bank on the site. The remaining retail space is planned to host a local Detroit-based restaurant, coffee-shop and bakery. There are currently on-going negotiations to solidify the users for all of the aforementioned retail spaces.

Amenities for the development include a lounge, library, dog park, sky club with rooftop pool and outdoor grilling stations, 24/7 Whole Body Fitness, wellness room, movie theatre, business center and conference room, and Zen Garden. The proposed development will also offer three outdoor spaces to residents, patrons, commercial tenants and the surrounding community.

Two hundred and sixty-one (261) parking spaces are proposed, of which 186 spaces will be located below-grade on the site. An additional 75 spaces are planned to be located at the adjacent SOMA parking garage via lease agreement.

The total cost for the development stands at \$95 million. CCA anticipates financing the project with senior and mezzanine construction loans, as well as other possible economic incentives such as Brownfield TIF. It is estimated that the project will generate 133 full-time labor and skilled trade jobs during construction. Once completed, a total of 62 full-time, 55 retail, and several management jobs are anticipated. The schedule for full completion of the project is estimated to be by the fourth quarter of 2022.



Image from City Club Apartments package

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

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

North: PD; Commercial Retail, Residential - Whole Foods Market and Starbucks

South: PD; Commercial Entertainment, Institutional - The Bonstelle Theatre and Michigan State University Detroit Center,

East: PD; Institutional - Detroit Health Department

West: PD; Residential - Orchestra Tower

Master Plan Consistency

The subject property is located in the Lower Woodward area of Neighborhood Cluster 4 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies (MP). The future land use designation for the subject parcels indicates (MRC) Mixed Residential-Commercial characterized by “medium-to-high density housing developed compatibly with commercial and/or institutional uses.”

The Master Plan-Zoning Table, which identifies the correlation between MP designations and zoning districts, classifies the PD zoning district as consistent with the MRC designation. The nature of the mixed-use retail and residential activity conforms to the intent of the designation.

Traffic, Circulation and Loading Concerns

The developer has been adamant that the retailer for their one-story building requires the loading area to be located off of Mack Avenue for daily traffic.

The proposed three-building development abuts a Major Street and Mass Transit Route according to the Master Plan of Policies. Woodward is the spine of the city and serves as an appropriate thoroughfare for dense development, especially because of its location within the greater downtown area. The level of vehicular activity for this site is one of the primary components of the project that City staff has been studying with CCA. CPC staff coordinated with the Planning and Development Department (PDD) and the Department of Public Works-Traffic and Engineering Division (DPW) to address the loading and circulation for the site. As a part of review, CPC staff requested that a traffic study be conducted by the petitioner. Giffels Webster was hired as a consultant to carry out this traffic impact study. The high-level summary of the results of that traffic study are below:

- The proposed development would not have a significant impact on traffic operations of the adjacent roadway network.
- The existing street system can sufficiently accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed development, as well as additional traffic from other developments, with negligible increases in delay experienced.
- Delivery vehicle access would be served by a loading dock entrance along Mack Avenue. Delivery trucks would typically utilize the loading entrance during non-peak periods. The signal timing progression of the adjacent intersections provides gaps in traffic flow to allow for truck movements. As such, the proposed loading operations would not have a significant impact on Mack Avenue traffic operations.

City staff is working with the developer to assess the results of the study and finalize an acceptable strategy.

It should also be noted that in 2019, similar concerns related to traffic, loading, circulation and pedestrian safety were central topics surrounding the SOMA development (a parking garage with ground-floor retail that is under construction) on the southern portion of the site of the current

development. To address this, CPC staff worked with the Mayor's Office and Administration departments to strategize on a solution to concerns that arose related to those issues. At that time, the Mayor's Office, Detroit Police Department (DPD) and the Department of Public Works came before this Body and committed to the following strategy:

1. The intersection of Edmund and John R will be converted from two-way to four-way stop controlled.
2. Pedestrian crossing signs with blinking lights will be installed at the intersection of Watson and John R.
3. Yield-to-pedestrian signs will be installed in the crosswalks at the intersection of Watson and John R.
4. Yield-to-pedestrian signs will be installed at the intersection of Eliot and John R.
5. Pedestrian-crossing signs with blinking lights will be installed at the intersection of Eliot Street and John R.
6. Spaces on Erskine will be marked as loading areas to alleviate congestion and double-parking while trucks unload for the Scott apartments and commercial business.
7. The DPD precinct commander has committed to allocating resources during high traffic event nights by deploying officers to ticket and to mitigate traffic impacts.

Per the Commission's request CPC staff is currently working to garner an update from the Administration on the progress of these measures.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The developer has held two meetings with the Brush Park CDC. The first meeting was held during the summer of 2020. Concerns expressed in the community meeting included the proposed color palette of the 16-story high-rise building and the need for it to be more consistent with the Brush Park Elements of Design (which are guidelines for the development) to foster compatibility with the historic district.

The project site is just outside of the boundaries of the local historic district, however, community members expressed that although not in the historic district boundary, the site is within the Brush Park neighborhood and therefore the materials and color palette should be contextual to that of the neighborhood.

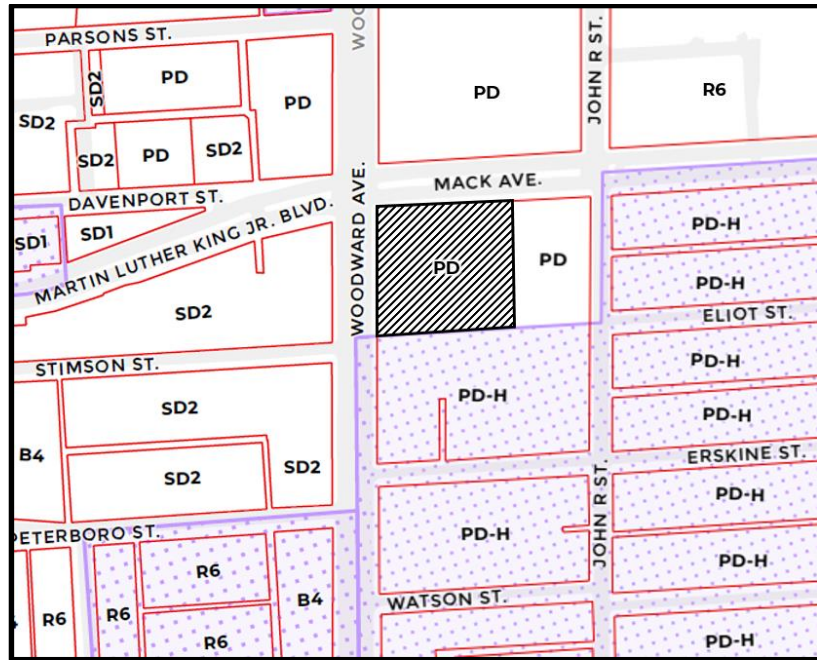
Members of the community also expressed concern related to a proposed wall sign included in the original plans. After multiple meetings with City staff in which staff has strongly expressed the same concerns regarding the original color palette and proposed sign, the developer has modified the color of the high-rise building and has also altered planned utilization of the wall from a sign to an art space.

The new plan was presented at a Brush Park CDC board meeting held in January of 2021. Members of the board indicated that they felt the modified plan was an improvement, but wanted to see additional modifications to the high-rise building utilizing warmer tones more compatible with the neighborhood. The community also wanted to ensure there would be opportunities for input on the proposed art space.

The public hearing on this matter is scheduled for February 4th where more information will be provided related to the project.

Attachment:
Plans

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



Proposed PD Modification Site