

City of Detroit

Lauren Hood, MCD
Chairperson
Donovan Smith
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
Director

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
Kenneth R. Daniels
David Esparza, AIA, LEED
Ritchie Harrison
Gwen Lewis
Melanie Markowicz
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.

TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Jamie Murphy, Staff
Timarie Szwed, Staff

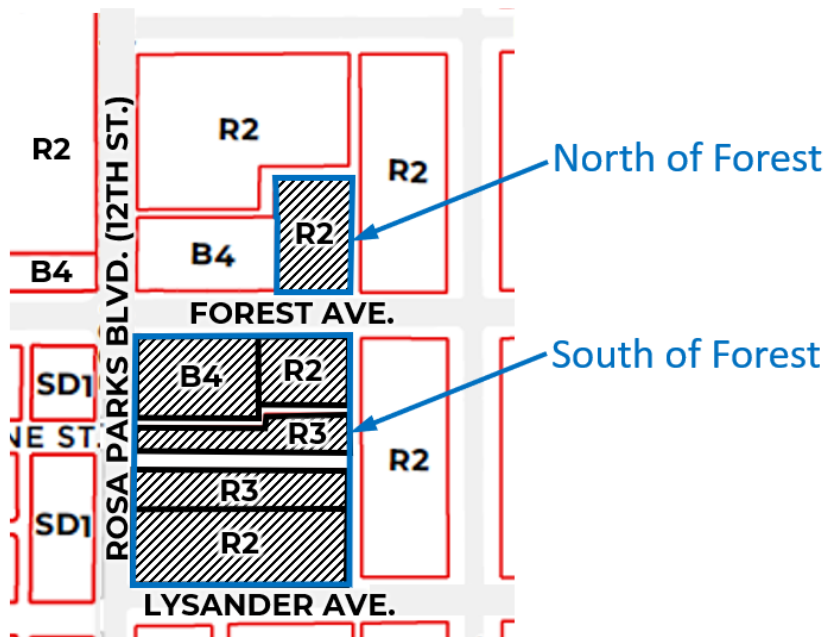
RE: Request of R. Philip Lockwood on behalf of XYZ 20-02 RPF LLC and the City Planning Commission to rezone 22 parcels from the R2 (Two-Family Residential), R3 (Low Density Residential), and B4 (General Business) zoning district classifications to the SD1 (Special Development, Small-Scale, Mixed-Use) zoning district classification. **(RECOMMEND PARTIAL APPROVAL; PARTIAL MODIFICATION)**

DATE: May 15, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

Regarding the request of R. Philip Lockwood on behalf of XYZ 20-02 RPF LLC and the City Planning Commission to rezone 22 parcels from the R2 (Two-Family Residential), R3 (Low Density Residential), and B4 (General Business) zoning district classifications to the SD1 (Special Development, Small-Scale, Mixed-Use) zoning district classification, the City Planning Commission staff recommends separating it into two distinct sections – north and south of Forest Avenue as illustrated below.

Staff recommends that the request for south of Forest be approved and that the request for north of Forest be amended to the R5 (Medium Density Residential) District instead of the SD1 District.



BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

The City Planning Commission (CPC) has received a request from R. Philip Lockwood on behalf of XYZ 20-02 RPF LLC to amend District Map No. 5 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, by showing an SD1 (Special Development, Small-Scale, Mixed-Use) zoning district classification where R2 (Two-Family Residential), R3 (Low Density Residential), and B4 (General Business) zoning district classifications are currently shown for twenty-two parcels generally bounded by West Hancock Street to the north, Avery Street to the east, Lysander Street to the south, and Rosa Parks Boulevard to the west.

The proposed map amendment is being requested to permit a mixed-use development consisting of approximately 59 residential units and 7,500 square feet of commercial space on fourteen scattered parcels. The current zoning allows both residential and commercial uses separately, but the SD1 district allows narrower setbacks and more walkable layouts. The City Planning Commission is partnering on the request in order to include additional parcels to make the zoning of the entire block consistent.

The site is located in City Council District 6 and measures about 3 acres. The area proposed for development is currently vacant land. The area proposed to be rezoned to maintain consistency is occupied by several vacant commercial buildings and a parking lot.



Aerial view of proposed rezoning

PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS

On April 21, 2022, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing on this rezoning request. At the hearing, three members of the public spoke—one in opposition, one in support, and one with general questions.

The neighbor at 1764 W. Forest Avenue (directly adjacent to the north of Forest portion) spoke in opposition at the hearing and also submitted two letters in opposition to the northern portion of the rezoning. They support rezoning to a higher density district such as B2 or R5, but not to a district that permits no setbacks such as SD1. They feel that it would be inconsistent with the existing development of the neighborhood and would increase issues with stormwater runoff among other concerns. Please see the attached letters for the full details. At this time, the applicant does not want to change the request to accommodate this suggestion.

Four letters in support of the rezoning have been submitted. One is from the Woodbridge Citizens' Council and three are from residents on Commonwealth Street. Reasons for support included:

- The density allowed in the SD1 District is more similar to the rest of the neighborhood than that allowed by the R2 and R3 Districts.
- The setbacks required by the R2 District are too wide and the parking requirements are too high resulting in sprawling developments that don't fit the character of Woodbridge.
- The neighborhood stands to benefit from the new investment, new residents, and new businesses.
- The SD1 District has been successful in driving neighborhood revitalization in Midtown.
- Mr. Lockwood's planned inclusion of storm water infrastructure, native plantings, and affordable housing.

All of the letters are included as an attachment to this report.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

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

North: B4, R2 – Single-family dwelling with flower farm; vacant School
East: R2 – Single- and Two-family dwellings
South: R2 – Church; Single-family dwellings
West: SD1 – Vacant land recently rezoned and proposed for mixed-use development

Zoning Ordinance Approval Criteria

Section 50-3-70 of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance lists eight approval criteria on which zoning map amendments must be based. Following are the relevant criteria with CPC staff's analysis in italics:

- Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend or fact. *Historically, zoning has encouraged separation of uses which is apparent in the current zoning of this site—B4 (General Business) District at the intersection of the major streets and R2 (Two-Family Residential) & R3 (Low Density Residential) Districts in the interior blocks. More recently, it has become apparent that mixed-use neighborhoods—residential uses combined with small-scale commercial uses—*

create a more walkable area and allow less reliance on automobiles. This proposal reflects that trend.

- Whether the proposed amendment will have significant adverse impacts on other property that is in the vicinity of the subject tract. *Because this property has been vacant for an extended period, any development will bring increased activity and traffic to the site. The surrounding streets are designated as “major streets” and have unused capacity—Rosa Parks is 3 lanes (one way northbound) and West Forest is 4 lanes (one way eastbound). Bus routes also exist on Grand River and Rosa Parks. Significant adverse impacts to surrounding property are not likely. However, the adjacent neighbor on Forest has expressed concerns about allowing zero-lot line development due to concerns about storm water management, consistency with existing development, and lack of greenspace. As a result, CPC staff recommends R5 for that portion of the proposal.*
- Whether the proposed rezoning will create an illegal “spot zone.” *For the south of Forest portion of the rezoning, several blocks to the west across Rosa Parks Boulevard were recently rezoned to SD1 to permit a mixed-use development. This proposal will not create a spot zone, but will simply expand the SD1 area. For the north of Forest portion, the staff-recommended R5 District would not create a spot zone because it is similar to the R2 District in that both are residential with similar uses and setbacks. It will also create a buffer between the more intense B4 District to the east and the R2 to the west.*

Master Plan Consistency

The subject site is located within the Jeffries area of Neighborhood Cluster 4 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies. The Future Land Use map for this area shows “RL – Low Density Residential” for the subject property. The Planning and Development Department (PDD) has reviewed this proposed rezoning and determined that it is generally consistent with the Master Plan.

Design Review

Because the applicant is buying parcels from the Detroit Land Bank Authority, he is required to complete design review with PDD. After several meetings, PDD is supportive of the site plan and will continue to work with the developer on the design of the façade.

Community Input

A community meeting was held via Zoom on January 28, 2021. Flyers were distributed to the 16 properties adjacent to the proposed rezoning. There were about six families in attendance (1-4 people each). Questions were asked regarding timeline, affordability, stormwater management, alley reactivation and construction-related disturbances. Attendees seemed excited for the project and supported the proposed rezoning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis and consistent with the approval criteria of Section 50-3-70 of the Zoning Ordinance, CPC staff recommends:

- **APPROVAL** of the request to rezone the block bounded by Rosa Parks Boulevard to the west, Forest Avenue to the north, the north-south alley first west of Avery Street to the east, and Lysander Street to the south from the R2, R3, and B4 zoning districts to the SD1 zoning district.

- **APPROVAL** of the rezoning of three lots north of Forest Avenue commonly known as 1732, 1738, and 1746 West Forest from the R2 zoning district to the R5 zoning district.

Attachments: Public Hearing Notice
PDD Master Plan Interpretation
PDD Design Review feedback & updated elevations
Letters in support & opposition
R5 SD1 Comparison Overview & Zoning Ordinance Sections

cc: Antoine Bryant, Director, PDD
Karen Gage, PDD
Greg Moots, PDD
David Bell, Director, BSEED
James Foster, BSEED
Conrad Mallett, Corporation Counsel
Kimberly James, Law Department
Daniel Arking, Law Department