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**TO:** City Planning Commission

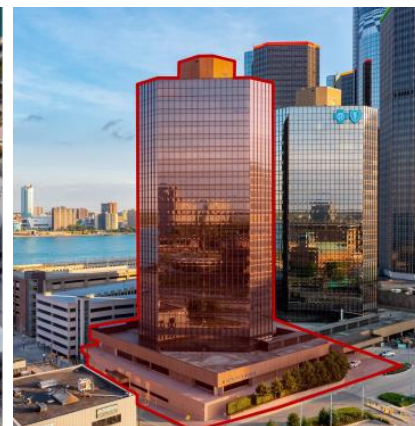
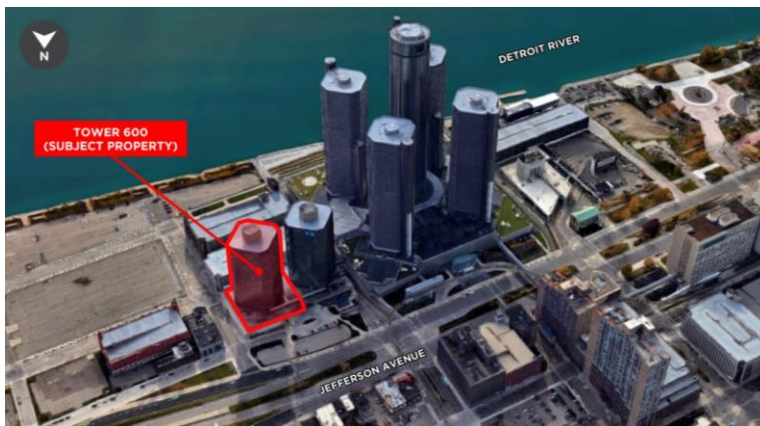
**FROM:** Kimani Jeffrey, City Planner

**RE:** Request of Michigan Acquisition East LLC, to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-3, District Map No. 2 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, by modifying the terms and conditions of the existing PD (Planned Development) zoning classification established by Ordinance 17-H, as amended by Ordinance 21-98, and currently exists on land generally bounded by East Jefferson Avenue, St. Antoine Street, Atwater Street and Beaubien Street.

**DATE:** May 13, 2024

Before the City Planning Commission is the request of Michigan Acquisition East LLC to modify the terms and conditions of the existing PD (Planned Development) zoning classification established by Ordinance 17-H, as amended by Ordinance 21-98.

The proposal seeks to expand the permitted uses to certain uses that are allowed in the B5 (Major Business District) zoning classification. This request is being made in order to make the permitted uses of the Renaissance Center 600 Tower commonly known as 590 East Jefferson consistent with the Major Commercial master plan designation and to increase viability for the site.



*Aerial Views*

## **BACKGROUND**

The Renaissance Center is comprised of seven skyscraper buildings in total, between Jefferson Avenue and the Detroit Riverfront. Five of the towers are owned by General Motors and two of the towers are now under the ownership of Michigan Avenue East LLC and represented by Friedman Real Estate. The Renaissance Center was completed and opened in 1977 via the provisions of Ordinance 17-H, which became effective in 1975 prior to construction of the original four 39-story office towers and a 73-story hotel in the center of those towers. The 500 and 600 towers were built subsequently to the original buildings.

The Farmington Hills-based Friedman Real Estate reportedly [purchased the two towers](#) (500 & 600) in December of 2023 from a New Jersey based utility company that owned them previously.

The PD zoning history for the Renaissance Center properties, inclusive of 900 E Atwater, 665 E Atwater, 1000 Franklin, 260 Schweizer Pl., 689 Franklin, 672 Woodbridge and 673 Franklin has numerous PD ordinances in it's legislative history. Outside of ordinance 17-H that established the original provisions for the Renaissance Center proper, some of the earliest ordinances in the history include Ord. 21-89 (generally the last two digits in the ordinance number is indicative of the year of enactment) which provided for a large scale mixed-use residential development known as Amerivest, which was ultimately not constructed. Ordinance 21-98 provided for the renovation of the Renaissance Center.

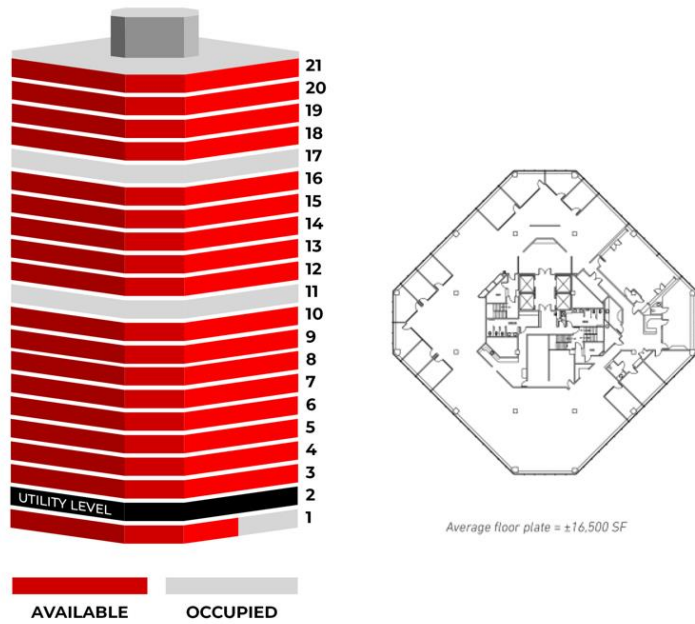
Other ordinances were adopted to permit the Beaubien parking garage (Ord. 17-00), the GM Plaza and Promenade Phase I & II and modifications thereto (Ord. 25-03, Ord. 28-04, Ord. 26-06), a modification to permit LED lighting for the buildings (Ord. 31-11). The last modification of the PD was adopted to allow for the expansion and exterior changes to the Renaissance Center proper, which was never initiated.

Not all of the PD ordinances which were adopted were completed. Where a PD site plan approval has been granted, but not acted upon or completed within three years of that approval, the development rights are considered lapsed.

## **PROPOSAL**

The proposal before the Commission requests to expand by-right uses for the 600 Renaissance Center tower only. The expanded uses would permit the B5 (Major Business zoning district) classification uses to exclude a small number of uses such as cannabis, motor vehicle related, mortuary/crematory & firearm uses. The reason for this request is because the owner states that there is currently only 10% occupancy in the building and that more permitted uses will make the building more marketable to possible tenants that may have interest.

The ownership team for the building doesn't yet have plans for the building, but wants to be able to market the building for different options and return to the city staff once potential leases have been identified. If this proposal were to be adopted, since the PD is still in place, review and approval would still be required at CPC staff level minimally, according to the ordinance. However, due to interest of this item, staff would plan to bring any major new proposal for the building to the Commission and/or City Council for review prior to sign-off for anything that is not within the historic scope of uses that have been permitted. To-date. The historic uses for the property have been 'office, retail and restaurant and surface parking lot, commercial'.



Average floor plate = ±16,500 SF

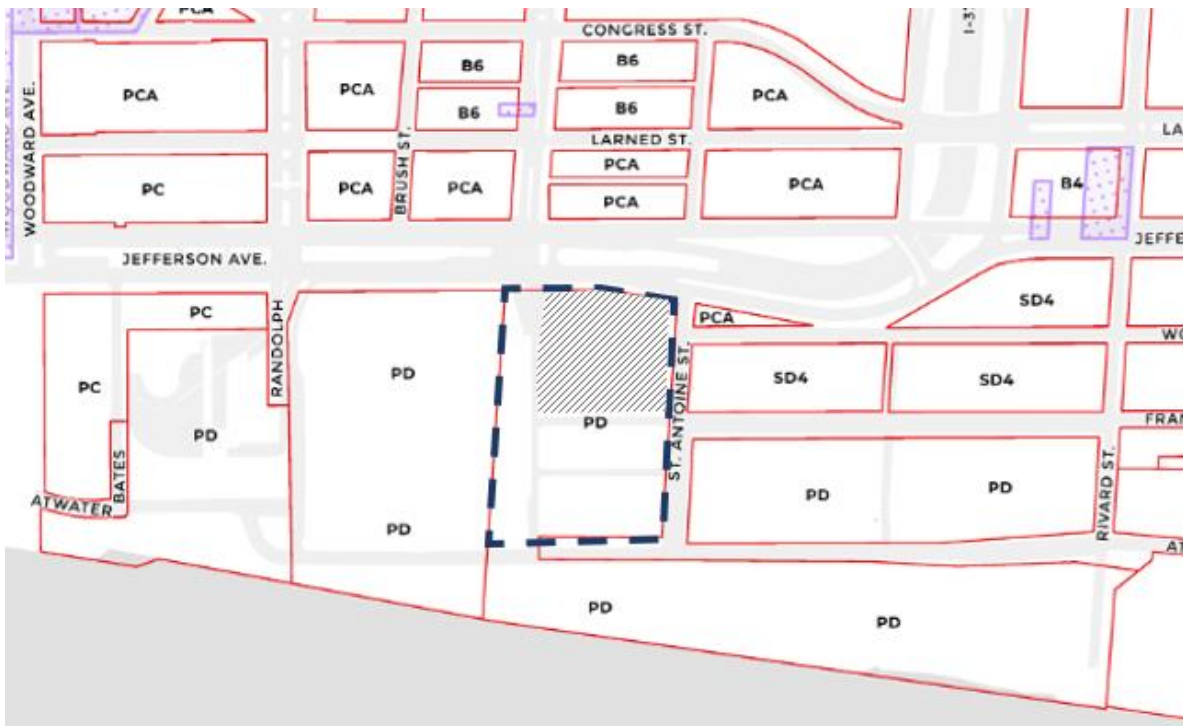
current occupancy of the Ren Cen 600 tower

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### *Surrounding Zoning and Land Use*

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

- North:** PD; parking lot
- East:** PD; Riverfront market, Detroit Racquet Club, parking structure
- South:** SD4 & PD; Port Atwater Parking garage
- West:** PD; Renaissance Center towers



Zoning Map

### ***Master Plan Consistency***

The subject rezoning site is located within the Central Business District area of Neighborhood Cluster 4 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies (MP). The Future Land Use map for this area shows Special Commercial (CS).

According to the Master Plan Zoning Table that correlates Master Plan designations to the Zoning Ordinance classifications, the B5 zoning classification is consistent with the (CS) future land use designation.

The Planning and Development Department (P&DD) has been requested to provide a letter confirming the consistency of this proposal with the Master Plan.

### ***Proposed Zoning***

#### **PD PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

This district will permit planned developments throughout the City and will be particularly useful in urban renewal areas. Such planned developments shall be substantially in accord with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan, by having a major land use that corresponds to the most general category of land use, which are Residential, Retail and Local Services, Industrial, Mixed Use, Parks and Open Space, and Other, proposed in the Master Plan for the area involved. Such planned developments shall provide a desirable environment for the uses proposed and shall not be out of harmony with their general surroundings. The regulations of the district are designed to accomplish this by permitting flexibility in overall development while ensuring adequate safeguards and standards for public health, safety, convenience, and general welfare and, where applicable, encouraging historic preservation.

#### **COMMUNITY INPUT**

The petitioner has informed several neighbors and entities about this proposal. Those that have been engaged include the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, the Downtown Detroit Partnership, the Pope Francis Center, St Peter & Paul Jesuit Church, and the Millender Center.

Attachment:

cc: Antoine Bryant, Director, PDD  
Greg Moots, PDD  
David Bell, Director, BSEED  
Conrad Mallett, Corporation Counsel  
Bruce Goldman, Law  
Daniel Arking, Law  
Kevin D. Johnson, President, DEGC