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Frederick E. Russell, Jr.
Rachel M. Udabe

City Planning Commission Meeting

MINUTES
June 26, 2025
5:00 P.M.

I. Opening

A. Call to Order – Chairperson Donovan Smith called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Attendees: Adrian-Keith Bennett, Kenneth Daniels, Ritchie Harrison, Frederick Russell (arrive 5:37 pm), Donovan Smith, and Rachel Udabe

A quorum was present.

C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

Commissioner Harrison moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.

II. Meeting minutes of February 27, 2025

Commissioner Udabe moved to approve the Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Daniels. Motion Approved.

III. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

A. 5:15 PM PUBLIC HEARING – To consider the request of the Detroit Land Bank Authority in conjunction with the Detroit City Planning Commission to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-6, District Map No. 5 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show an R5 (Medium Density Residential) zoning classification where a PD (Planned Development) zoning classification is shown at 4838 Trumbull, and to show an SD1 (Special Development District, Small-Scale, Mixed-Use) zoning classification where a PD (Planned Development) zoning classification is shown at 4830 Trumbull and 4827 Lincoln. The subject properties are generally bounded by an alley to the east, West Warren Street to the north, Trumbull Street to the west, and West Forest Avenue to the south. The proposed map amendment is being requested to allow the Detroit Land Bank Authority to pursue small-scale, pedestrian and transit-oriented mixed-use development that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, the amendment would permit Citadel of Faith to

continue using their existing parking lot for parish-related parking. The current PD zoning classification does not support these types of uses within this district. **(DP)** 45 min

Present: Mark Jones and Rob Lynn, Detroit Land Bank Authority
Dolores Perales, CPC Staff

Dolores Perales presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC Report dated June 25, 2025, a rezoning request. She explained that the Detroit Land Bank (DLBA) and co-petitioner, City Planning Commission (CPC) request to rezone 4830 Trumbull from PD to R5; rezone 4830 Trumbull split zone from a PD to R5 and SD1; and 4827 Lincoln from PD to SD1. CPC joined to allow 4830 Trumbull, a parcel owned by Faith Citadel, to ensure lot consistency. The site is located in District 6, Woodbridge Neighborhood. She gave a background on the site's parcels being a prior 1960-1970 project, namely University City 2 urban renewal area redevelopment plan. The previous plan halted due to community opposition. Therefore, only one portion was redeveloped, and the remaining parcel is undeveloped. Ms. Perales described the DLBA proposes to split 4830 Trumbull from combined, and it will be split zone to R5 and a portion to SD1 (map shown). The DLBA and Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD) have collaborated to pursue and manage a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process for small-scale mixed-use development affordable housing. Also, the rezoning will allow Faith Citadel to use the parcel for church parking. She described the surrounding land use around the site. The Planning and Development Department interpretation noted that this rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan.

Further, Ms. Perales described the community engagement conducted by DLBA with the Woodbridge Neighborhood Development Corporation and Woodbridge Citizen Council. The DLBA distributed flyers and posted them on park bulletin boards. The DLBA responded to concerns raised regarding parking availability, and they clarified that parking and design plans will be addressed after the RFP process. There was one letter of opposition regarding parking and congestion. CPC Staff and DLBA met with the members of Faith Citadel church. Faith Citadel stated that they have maintained the properties at 4830 Trumbull and 4827 Lincoln since 2012. The church does support the rezoning to R5; however, they expressed hesitancy to support the DLBA parcels' rezoning. The DLBA offered a willingness to sell the property to Faith Citadel through a formal RFP process; however, DLBA expressed the condition that the land must be developed to mixed-use affordable housing.

Mark Jones stated that DLBA and HRD plan to market the properties at a later time. He explained that based on feedback from the neighborhood they decided to propose a rezoning for SD1. He also shared their contact information.

Public Testimony

Harvey Carey, Pastor of Faith Citadel commented that the church maintained the property adjacent to the church. He mentioned how Citadel tried to purchase the parcels, yet it has been difficult to purchase combined parcels. He stated that Faith Citadel would like to use the vacant land for green space and park for its church community and neighborhood.

Aaron Sims commented on his experience with Michigan historic preservation and the historic aspects of the vacant site. Also, he noted it can be used as a community space.

Anita Wilhelm commented concerns on the parking and desires the lots to be used for

community purpose. She finds displeasure in there being more 300-400 apartments planned.

Mark Jones of DLBA clarified that there is not a required number of units planned. The purpose is to rezone the land. Later, DLBA and HRD will collaborate for an RFP process.

Azizah Roguee, Faith Citadel attendee, commented the positive ways the community uses the vacant space adjacent to the church.

Desiree Hunter commented that R1 zoned neighborhoods staying R1 single family use. He is displeased with the zoning change, and he stated how zoning affects the community and home values.

Ayana Treadway, Faith Citadel attendee, commented using the vacant lot for community outreach and community garden.

Steven Johnson, Faith Citadel attendee, commented the vacant area can be used as greenspace for the community. He mentioned that the church has cared for the property and would like to use and purchase it.

Ms. Perales stated CPC Staff will return with this matter at a later date.

B. 6:00 PM PUBLIC HEARING – To consider a text amendment that would amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, with respect to Institutional Building Adaptive Reuse and Tactical Preservation:

- To define institutional adaptive building reuse and provide for the adaptive reuse and preservation of vacant or underutilized institutional buildings, such as libraries, fire and police stations, post offices, court houses, schools and educational institutions, religious institutions and religious residential, utility buildings, school buildings and other institutional buildings, in residential and zoning districts where such new uses would otherwise be prohibited.
- To allow approximately 50 permissible uses that provide day to day goods and services - including residential, civic, cultural, educational, retail, office, food service, and light industrial uses on a conditional basis, when they contribute positively to the surrounding community and limit adverse impacts.
- To prevent demolition of subject buildings by requiring that at a percentage of the building be retained in order to receive certain development standard reductions.
- To allow for tactical preservation practices that modify development standards and permit the partial and incremental reuse of existing buildings through the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department to encourage the preservation of buildings that are revitalized one space at a time. **(KJ)** **45 min**

Present: Kimani Jeffrey, CPC Staff, Greg Moots, PDD Staff, Edwina King, PDD Staff, and Lisa DiChiera, HDAB Staff

Kimani Jeffrey introduced the collaborating project and team consisting of HDAB, PDD, and HDC working to amend the proposed ordinance regarding institutional building adaptive reuse and tactical preservation.

Lisa DiChiera stated that the Historic Designation Advisory Board (HDAB) is pleased to present the proposed amendment as a tool to maintain legacy for neighborhoods. The

amendment addresses the reuse of historic and older buildings, and set a path to help developers bring back generational anchors, i.e., churches, schools, and post offices.

Edwina King mentioned that the community is excited about the proposed ordinance amendment. There is much anticipation on seeing how buildings can be reused or restored as innovative development happening directly in the community.

Greg Moots presented via PowerPoint the proposed text amendment for institutional building adaptive reuse and tactical preservation. He explained that the amendment is a tool to keep vacant buildings and to allow the reuse of various public, civic and institutional buildings, i.e., old fire station became a restaurant. He showed list of buildings eligible for reuse. Mr. Moots explained the proposed amendment will enable these buildings to be used as new housing and it speeds up the development process. Although each building is different, the amendment will allow conditional residential zoned buildings with a limited number of uses to skip a Board of Zoning Appeals process and only undergo a Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental (BSEED) Special Land Use (SLU) hearing. It is noted that building reuse makes buildings viable and something that fits in the neighborhood. He stated that the adaptive reuse of school buildings cut high costs of demolition. He discussed that the City currently has 19 uses and the amended ordinance has 52 uses, so a revision will expand the uses of schools, churches and religious facilities. Mr. Moots displayed photos of buildings that have successfully applied adaptive reuse, and he noted that this proposed amendment will support neighborhood investment.

Kimani Jeffrey stated that this ordinance will allow 50 new uses that would be conditional and require a SLU hearing, wherein the public in proximity to the site will receive a notice to provide feedback on projects. He explained that since parking is a major concern due to high costs, it is proposed to reduce 50% of the parking requirement. Also, it is proposed to reduce loading dock requirements by 50% to assist developers in meeting challenging zoning requirements. Additionally, 75% of the building is to be retained during demolition; the amendment addresses if the majority of the building is demolished, but it is required to keep at least 75% of the building according to the ordinance. He explained that including tactical preservation is the building reuse strategy that focused on partial or incremental reuse of a building. Tactical preservation is filling a building space by space until 100% of the building is brought back online. Also, he explained that the important projects have very high capital costs to bring online and opportunity to complete it one space at a time helps the project to finish over time. For example, Michigan Central Station was developed one floor at a time until the entire building was brought on line. Any buildings undergoing adaptive reuse will add to the vibrancy of the neighborhood, fulfill day-to-day needs of the neighborhood, and create opportunity for employment.

Further, Kimani Jeffrey reviewed community engagement on this proposed zoning ordinance amendment. He mentioned that community engagement started in March 2025. There were developer focused group meetings held with experienced developers to determine if there exists any interest of this type of redevelopment. Thereafter, a broader community engagement event was held on April 7, 2025. The DON meeting showed support and City Council members engaged. There were DON meetings held district by district. The Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) property manager was contacted to obtain their viewpoint and they support the amendment. DPSCD owns half of the City school buildings. There were public hearing notices sent out to 6,000 subscribers of CPC mailing list and physical mailing to more than 1,300 community groups and block clubs. He stated that the proposed amendments received majority of support and 10 letters

of support and two letters of opposition. One of the opposition letter writers has an unrelated BZA case. Due to the feedback, there were additional potential new uses added, i.e., theaters and data centers.

Kimani Jeffrey responded that 39 school buildings are owned by the City, approximately 30 owned by DPSCD, and 13 privately owned. Additionally, Greg Moots cited official City assessor record information on buildings overall categorized as 1,052 religious structures, 18 libraries, and 245 schools of all sorts of ownership. These statements were in response to Commissioner Russell's questions.

Public Testimony

Rebecca Savage, former HDAB historic planner, commented support for the proposed ordinance amendment. She was on the project team looking to begin the process to solve the problem and initiate adaptive reuse. She is pleased and believes that it will make a dramatic difference in the neighborhoods and City's historic preservation.

Vanessa Peete commented on concerns of District 3 industrial buildings with contamination and reuse, and that District 3 is not a thriving community at this time. She requested that this matter is postponed until next administration.

Mr. Warner commented his concerns and details on a neighborhood situation involving a building that has a fraudulent description of the building.

Issac Hunter commented that he is not in support of the proposed zoning amendment and his displeasure of the proposed zoning changes density, instability, adds strain on infrastructure, and traffic congestion. He is in support of preserving R1 neighborhoods.

Dillion Hengy commented his support of the ordinance. He mentioned his pleasure in working on the Higginbotham school project. He mentioned his support in redevelopment of these buildings and bring back the communities in the City.

Amy Hemmeter commented in support intensity and density is beneficial to public transportation.

Gram Welling, developer, commented his support of the ordinance. He stated displeasure in the current rezoning process as a challenging. He stated his positive anticipation of this ordinance making historic structures reused, repurposed, and reinvigorated.

Michael Poris, an architect, commented in support of the proposed amendment. He stated that this will create an opportunity for developers and development projects to make an impact to redevelop underutilized and non-utilized buildings.

Kimani Jeffrey stated that with CPC staff's research and analysis, summary presented, and city-wide engagement resulting in majority support, Staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve to waive requirements for same day action, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.

Commissioner Bennett moved to approve the 6:00 p.m. public hearing zoning text amendment as presented, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.

IV. Public Comment –

Mr. Jay Jurgensen commented on Jefferson-Chalmers Water Project and GLWA matter. He mentioned his displeasure in the CPC Staff report regarding community engagement activities; PDD's suggestion the future Master Plan would itemize this as a compatible land use and its consistent with a Master Plan. It is not consistent with existing master plan and proposed documents; and the biggest challenge with the process that it is very opaque; community has not had the opportunity to provide considerable input in the project; and community is unaware of the day-to-day activities of the project.

Mr. Hunter commented on zoning laws and incomplete community engagement. He stated his displeasure with CPC approving the proposed ordinance amendment. He emphasized his desire to live in an R1 neighborhood, and he feels pressured to move to a suburb.

Rose Leguise asked how many of the eligible buildings in adaptive reuse will be in District 3 and District 2?

Mr. Warner commented his opposition of the adaptive reuse ordinance.

Nicole Johnson commented on the GLWA pumping station project. She said GLWA is changing the street landscape. She expressed displeasure in the project and asked CPC to take into consideration the residents.

V. Unfinished Business –

- A. Consideration of the request of Wallick Development, LLC, to rezone land located at 4094 Duane Street, being the block bounded by Richton Street to the north, Petoskey Avenue to the west, Duane Street to the south, and Holmur Street to the east, from the current R2 (Two-Family Residential District) zoning classification to the SD1 (Special Development District, Small-Scale, Mixed-Use) zoning classification.

(EF) (RECOMMEND APPROVAL)

30 min

Present: Gram Welling of Wallick Development, Debbie Fisher of Hope Village Revitalization, and Lolita Williams of Presbyterian Villages of Michigan
Eric Fazzini, CPC Staff

Eric Fazzini presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC Report dated June 25, 2025, a proposed rezoning request from R2 to SD1. He described the City-owned site as being located in District 7 in the Winterhalter neighborhood abutting Russell Woods to the south of the north end of Nardin Park and to the east of Dexter Avenue corridor. He showed a map of the site and described it as the former Alice Birney Elementary School property. The school was closed in 2009, and it was demolished in 2016. He showed an aerial view of the area's zoning map and described the surrounding area's zoning. The SD1 will permit multiple family dwelling units. Mr. Fazzini stated that R2 zoning limits development opportunities and number of units allowed. The HRD selected an RFP response for the developer and acquisitions of multi-family housing. The development has 11 multiple family dwelling buildings. The development was described as (1) Phase One consists of 11 multiple-family buildings, 53 units total which includes 13 one-bedroom, 28 two-bedroom, 12 three-bedroom and a clubhouse near Monterey Street. (2) Phase Two is described as a three-story 52-unit senior apartment building with access from Monterey Street. The elevations are still in progress, but sample building designs have been submitted (photo

shown).

The developer addressed the community meetings' feedback by modifying and moving the building's access point. Mr. Fazzini stated that at the CPC public hearing one neighbor spoke of concerns with engagement and project overall; however, generally there has been support. The PDD submitted an interpretation that the rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan, and it anticipates some level of residential and commercial. The size of the rezoning does not change the overall character of the area.

Gram Welling responded that the development offers affordable housing at 30%-80% average median income (AMI), with the average below 60% AMI. The project will meet the guidelines of the low-income tax program through Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA). Mr. Welling explained that the large component of units in family townhome development and senior development that will be at 30% AMI. This is approximately 25% of the units across both projects. Additionally, there will be 16 project-based voucher units available for residents below 30% AMI. They are continuously working with market analysis and income study to make sure the development's residents are diverse. This was in response to Commissioner Udabe's questions.

Mr. Fazzini stated that considering CPC Staff analysis, CPC report, and appropriate applicable criteria fulfilled Staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Daniels moved to approve the Staff's recommendation for the rezoning as presented, seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion Approved.

- B.** Consideration of the request of Patrick Lynch to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-9, District Map No. 8 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification where a R3 (Low Density Residential District) zoning classification exists at the property commonly known as 656 and 662 Melbourne Street, generally bounded by Melbourne Street, Oakland Avenue, Mt. Vernon Street and Kingsley Street. The proposed rezoning is being requested in order to allow for the installation of an HVAC system and outdoor lounge expansion to the adjacent Schvitz Health Club.

(KJ)

30 min

Present: Bradley Gorand and Paddy Lynch, Petitioners
Kimani Jeffrey, CPC Staff

Kimani Jeffrey presented via PowerPoint rezoning request for the building and property adjacent to the Schvitz Health Club Center from R3 to B4 classification. The petitioner recently bought a nearby residential home as a buffer for additional space between any residential and the planned Schvitz lounge expansion (map shown). This rezoning request is to allow the installation of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system installed to parcels west of the site and an expansion of the lounge (photos shown). There is shared parking at the Schvitz. PDD interpreted that this rezoning is consistent with the Master Plan.

There were two letters of support received. Also, there was one letter of opposition. Mr. Jeffrey detailed the letter with the neighbor's concerns with Schvitz's club not being inclusive of the neighborhood, exclusive members, noise pollution, traffic hazards and parking. CPC Staff and petitioners invited the opposing neighbor to a meeting; however, the

invitation was turned down. Mr. Jeffrey described the Schvitz's plan to install noise buffers and monitor patrons' parking. Mr. Jeffrey stated that the business owners showed video of how they have attempted to change their reputation and becoming more inclusive with their members.

Bradley Gorand stated his disappointment with not being able to hold a meeting with the opposing neighbor. He stated that he is aware of the past negative relationship with the neighborhood, and he wants CPC and the public to know that they have a relationship with the neighborhood at large. Also, he confirmed Mr. Jeffrey's statements that Schvitz has not received any formal noise complaints. He mentioned they are installing HVAC system with sound dampening panels.

Mr. Gorand responded that the Schvitz Health Club total capacity is 120 persons in response to Commissioner Daniels.

Mr. Jeffrey responded that the HVAC system is the petitioner's most immediate concern. They are trying to bring the upstairs ballroom back online, and they need the HVAC in order to make it operable. Thereafter, they plan to complete the expansion of the pool and patio. This was in response to Commissioner Smith's questions.

Mr. Jeffrey stated that with the petitioner's conformance with the applicable criteria and support from the surrounding community (even though they did receive one opposition), CPC Staff recommends approval of the rezoning.

Commissioner Russell moved to accept Staff's recommendation, seconded by Commissioner Udabe. Motion Approved.

There was a Roll Call Vote:

**5 Yays - Bennett, Harrison, Russell, Smith, and Udabe; 1 Nay - Daniels
Motion Approved**

- C. Consideration of the request of the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) to rezone land located at 700 Conner Street, 692 Conner Street, 686 Conner Street, 682 Conner Street, 678 Conner Street, 672 Conner Street, 703 Navahoe Street, 693 Navahoe Street, 687 Navahoe Street, 681 Navahoe Street, 675 Navahoe Street, and the adjacent vacated Freud Street and public alleys located between Conner Street and Navahoe Street, from the current R2 (Two-Family Residential District) zoning classification to R5 (Medium Density Residential District) or PD (Planned Development District) zoning classification. **(EF) (PRELIMINARY APPROVAL) 45 min**

Present: Eric Fazzini, CPC Staff
Navid Mehram, Chief Operating Officer, Great Lakes Water Authority
Paul Ransom, Life Cycle Project Manager, Great Lakes Water Authority

Eric Fazzini presented via PowerPoint and based on CPC report dated June 25, 2025, a rezoning request from Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA). The site location is District 4, Jefferson-Chalmers neighborhood in the center of Freud Street to the south of Jefferson Avenue. He showed a map highlighting the route of Freud Street that crosses three neighborhoods and serves as its collector. Mr. Fazzini stated that City Council approved the rerouting of Freud Street in July 2024, with Tennessee Street to the west and Algonquin Street to the east and Freud Street bending to the north (map of route shown).

Mr. Fazzini stated the vacation would create a GLWA development site, and private property. He displayed images with recent improvements, and homes that are immediately abutting the new proposed pumping station. The existing DWSD Freud pumping station was constructed in 1954 and manages sanitary and storm water. He explained the parallel relief sewers that run below Freud Street at Ashland (goes north) and Fox Creek relief sewers (goes east). The construction of a new pumping station will allow GLWA to access these sewers through an isolation shaft, block flow to the existing Freud pump station, and conduct maintenance to the old Freud pump station during dry weather. He displayed renderings and described the site's proposed fencing, loading, enclosed courtyard, landscaping, and gated parking. The building's height and brick color were revised. Mr. Fazzini stated that it is unclear whether GLWA or the City will provide street / sidewalk improvements. PDD found the new pumping station as essential infrastructure that supports the residential area, and the rezoning to be consistent with the Master Plan.

The site is less than two acres, and the proposed rezoning to R5 would permit a major utility pumping station as public, civic, and institutional use. According to the CPC Report p 13, "CPC Staff supports, approval of a PD zoning classification, instead of the R5 option, subject to GLWA submitting a complete and PD development plan set for staff review and CPC consideration." Further, Mr. Fazzini noted that staff analyzed and suggests a PD, since it is flexible and gives the City more control.

Mr. Fazzini discussed that there were letters received from District 4 Community Advisory Group and NAK Block Club Community each in opposition to the proposal. The project has received substantial opposition from the community. He mentioned that GLWA conducted extensive community engagement for more than a year.

Navid Mehram via PowerPoint showed elevation views of pumping station project. He discussed GLWA's public engagement meetings at the Eastlake Baptist Church. He mentioned that due to community feedback GLWA compromised its original design plan and updated dimensions and aesthetics of building (photos displayed). Also, he showed comparison pumping stations or related facilities located in nearby metropolitan communities which are located inside a residential neighborhood, i.e., Grosse Pointe, Pontiac and Commerce Township. The Fairview pump station that is adjunct to the Manoogian Mansion. He stated that these comparison pump stations or facilities in affluent areas are not identified as nuisances but integrated in the community.

Navid Mehram stated that other alternatives were considered by GLWA but due to high costs (\$500 million-\$1 billion), and high community disruption (permanently closing off Freud Street), they were determined not feasible. This statement was in response to Commissioner Bennett's question.

Mr. Mehram responded that GLWA will install the landscaping of this project, and there will be a new rain garden within the facility to improve the drainage along Freud Street. This statement was in response to Commission Harrison's questions.

Chairman Smith request at the leisure of the chair that the item is brought back to the next meeting.

Chairman Smith requested that Staff bring back this matter on July 17, 2025.

VI. New Business

- A. **Election of Officer** - Filling vacant office of Vice-Chair Secretary **10 min**

Chairman Smith directed to move the election of new officer to the next meeting.

VII. Staff Report – There was no Staff Report.

Chairman Smith directed to forego Staff Report.

VIII. Member Report – There were no Member Reports.

Chairman Smith directed to forego Member Reports.

IX. Communications – There were no Communications.

X. Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 p.m.