

City of Detroit

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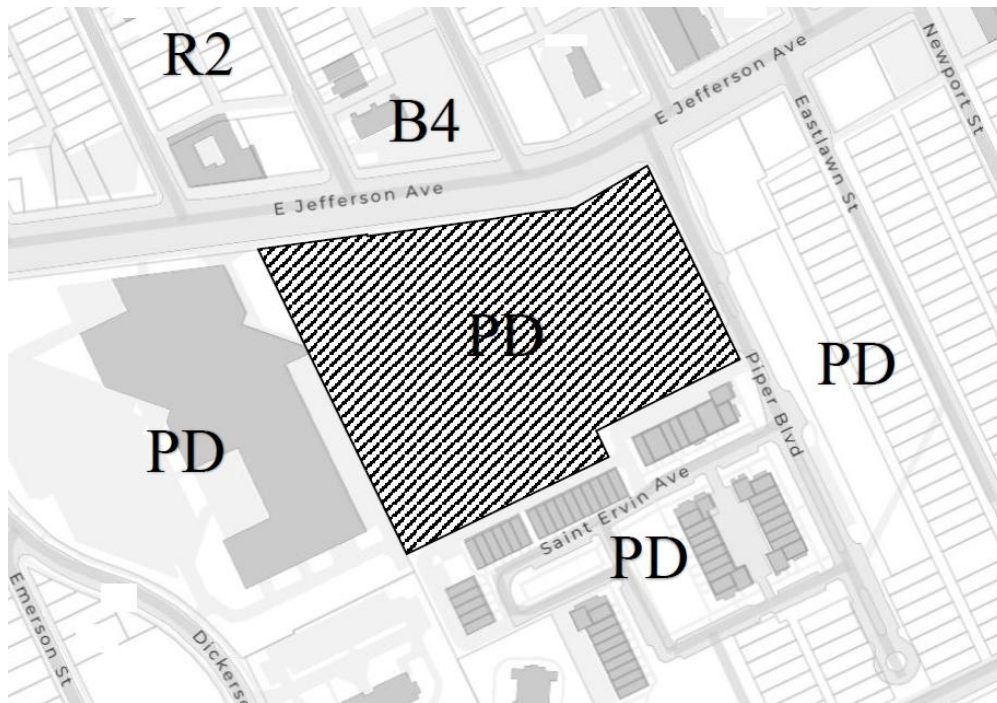
TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Eric Fazzini, Staff

RE: Request of Michael A. Curis, Riverbend Properties, Inc., in conjunction with the Detroit City Planning Commission as co-petitioner, to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-33, District Map No. 31 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification where a PD (Planned Development District) zoning classification is shown at 13200, 13320 and 13328 East Jefferson Avenue, generally located at the southwest corner of the intersection of East Jefferson Avenue and Piper Boulevard, commonly referred to as the Riverbend Plaza shopping center. **(PUBLIC HEARING)**

DATE: March 31, 2026

On April 2, 2026, the City Planning Commission (CPC) will hold a 5:15 p.m. public hearing on the subject zoning map amendment (rezoning) request. Below is a map indicating the area proposed to be amended.



Outlined area is proposed to be rezoned from PD to B4

PROPOSAL

This zoning map amendment has been requested to replace the existing PD zoning classification that applies to the Riverbend Plaza shopping center with a B4 zoning classification. No improvements have been proposed to the shopping center at this time. Letters of support submitted by the applicant indicate that the proposed B4 zoning will support development at this location and help attract new retailers for residents.

The shopping center currently contains a mix of sales-oriented and service-oriented retail uses. The west half of the shopping center (13200) contains a 41,000 square foot multi-tenant building (Dollar Tree and Medical anchors) and a 6,500 square foot out lot building (O'Reilly Auto Parts) near East Jefferson Avenue. The east half of the shopping center (13328) contains a 25,000 square foot multi-tenant building located behind an existing vacant out lot development that previously contained a drive-through restaurant (13320).



Boundary of Rezoning Area with Taxpayer Addresses

The City Planning Commission is included as a co-petitioner so that the parcel located at 13320 East Jefferson Avenue can be considered for B4 zoning. This parcel is under separate ownership and contains a vacant drive-through restaurant that fronts East Jefferson Avenue near the east main entrance to the shopping center across from Coplin Street.



13320 East Jefferson Avenue – CPC Co-petitioner

BACKGROUND

The site was initially rezoned to PD in 1981 as a part of ordinance number 430-H related to the Jefferson Chalmers Urban Renewal Plan. It wasn't until 1992 that the development of the Riverbend Plaza shopping center was considered and approved by the city for a land sale and rezoning. This development was a partnership between the applicant, Mr. Curis, the City, and local community development stakeholders.

The existing shopping center was built in two phases: phase one in 1993 and phase two in 1996. In 2001, the City approved a minor modification to the PD to permit the development of a Home Depot store to the east of the shopping center site across Piper Avenue. This development did not occur and the area remains primarily vacant former residential blocks to the rear alley of Lakewood Street. This area remains PD and would be subject to either PD modification or rezoning prior to any redevelopment that is not consistent with the approved Home Depot PD. No improvements to this area have been presented at this time.

Also in 2001, the city approved a rezoning to PD and land sale to permit the development of 126 residential condominiums to the south of the shopping center site as a Phase IV of Riverbend Plaza. The development has been completed and is occupied. At the time CPC staff supported both of these additional phases of Riverbend Plaza as being compatible with the shopping center.

Mr. Curis is requesting the B4 zoning to better reflect the existing development; the PD was initially put in place to encourage development in line with the then Jefferson Chalmers urban renewal plan. During the pendency of the City's bankruptcy proceedings, the City's Emergency Manager issued Order No. 36 which repealed all of the City's urban renewal areas.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Zoning District Descriptions

Below are the Zoning Ordinance descriptions for the applicable zoning districts.

PD – Planned Development District

This district will permit planned developments throughout the City and will be particularly useful in district areas established in accordance with Section 74 of the Michigan Blighted Area Rehabilitation Act, being MCL 125.74, for urban renewal. Such planned developments shall be substantially in accordance 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.

B4 – General Business District

The B4 General Business District provides for business and commercial uses of a thoroughfare-oriented nature. In addition to these uses, other business, which may benefit by drawing part of their clientele from passing traffic are permitted. Additional uses, which may be successfully blended with permitted by-right uses, are conditional.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses

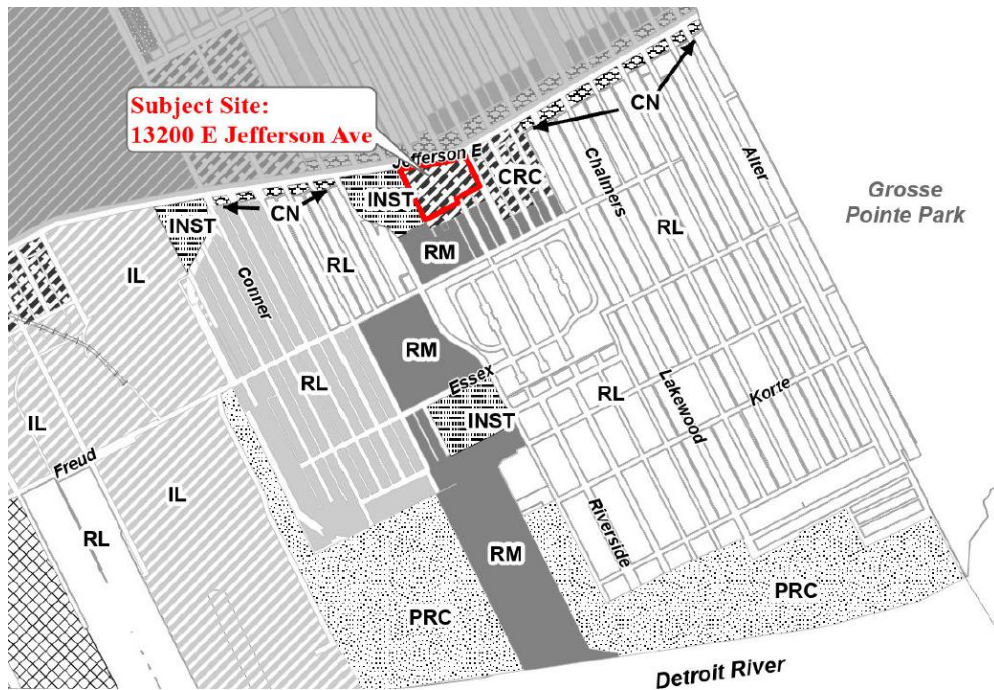
Surrounding zoning and land uses include the following:

- North (across Jefferson Ave): B4 – Comerica Bank, restaurant, vacant former Hotel Winston/Savarine
- East (across Piper Blvd): PD – Undeveloped Phase III of Riverbend Plaza (Home Depot never built)
- South: R2 – Residential Condominiums
- West: PD – Davis Aerospace Technical High School

Master Plan Consistency

The subject site is located in Neighborhood Cluster 3 of the East Riverside neighborhood in the Master Plan of Policies. Attached is a letter provided by the Planning & Development Department (P&DD) that states:

The site is located in the Master Plan’s East Riverside neighborhood. The current plan shows “Retail Center” (CRC) for the subject site. These districts “... are auto-oriented commercial sites featuring clustering of retail establishments adjacent to large parking areas. The area designated CRC is large, and the primarily commercial uses permitted under the rezoning will not change the overall character of the area. The rezoning is therefore generally consistent with the Master Plan.



Community Engagement

The petitioner has built, owned and operated the subject shopping center for the past 30 plus years. The applicant has contacted neighboring property owners and community groups active in the area, including the Eastside Community Network (ECN), the Riverbend Community Association, and the D4 Community Advisory Council. Attached are letters of support the applicant has provided from Jefferson East, Inc. and the Jefferson Chalmers Resource Center.

Rezoning Approval Criteria

Section 50-3-70 of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance lists eight approval criteria on which zoning map amendments must be based. Staff will provide findings regarding each criteria at a future CPC meeting.

- 1) Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend, or fact.
- 2) Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Master Plan and the stated purposes of the zoning code.
- 3) Whether the proposed amendment will protect the health, safety, and general 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.
- 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.
- 6) Whether the proposed amendment will have significant adverse impacts on other property that is in the vicinity of the subject tract.
- 7) The suitability of the subject property for the existing zoning classification and proposed zoning classification.
- 8) Whether the proposed rezoning will create an illegal “spot zone.”

Attachments: Riverbend Plaza Land Title Survey
Jefferson East Letter of Support
Jefferson Chalmers Resource Center Letter of Support
P&DD Master Plan Interpretation

cc: Alexa Bush, Director, P&DD
Greg Moots, P&DD
David Bell, Director, BSEED
James Foster, BSEED
Conrad L. Mallett, Corporation Counsel
Bruce Goldman, Law
Office of Latisha Johnson, City Council Member, District 4