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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

Adrian-Keith Bennett
Kenneth R. Daniels
Ashley Jordan
Stephanie R. Miller, BS, JD
Gary D. Ringer
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.
Jai Singletary

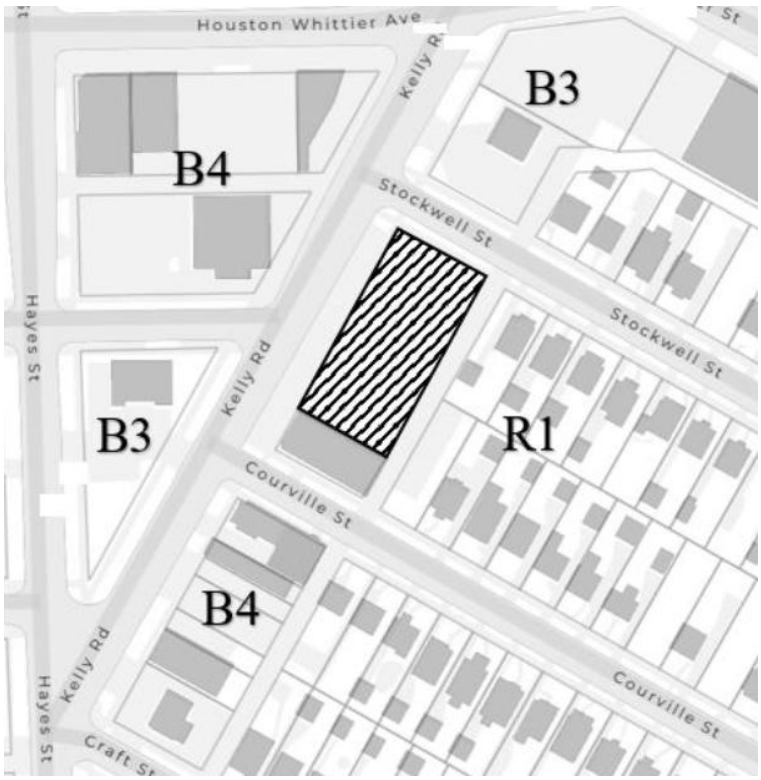
TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Eric Fazzini, Staff

RE: Request of Nathan Harvey, with Detroit Architect LLC, on behalf of property owner Michael Johnigan, with Platinum Affairs Event Hall LLC, in conjunction with the Detroit City Planning Commission as co-petitioner to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-38, District Map No. 36 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification where a B3 (Shopping District) zoning classification is shown at 11440 and 11426 Kelly Road, generally located on the est side of Kelly Road between Courville Street and Stockwell Streets.

DATE: November 17, 2026

On May 7, 2026, the City Planning Commission (CPC) held a public hearing on the subject zoning map amendment (rezoning) request. Below is a map indicating the area proposed to be rezoned.



Outlined area is proposed to be rezoned from B3 to B4

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

This zoning map amendment has been requested to allow the applicant to redevelop the existing vacant building at 11426 Kelly Road as a rental hall. The site currently has a B3 Shopping District zoning classification, which does not permit rental halls. The B4 General Business District is the least-intense Business district where rental halls are permitted. Rental halls are permitted as a Conditional Use in the B4 district, so additional zoning approvals would be required prior to permitting if this request is approved. Additionally, the use would require the Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department's (BSEED) approval of a verified petition per the specific use standards for rental halls in Section 50-12-309 of the Zoning Ordinance:

(1) Rental halls shall be prohibited within 500 feet of land zoned R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, or residential PD. Said prohibition shall be waived upon presentation to the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department of a verified petition requesting such waiver, signed by two-thirds of those persons owning, residing, or doing business on land, other than vacant land that is designated by the City Assessor as "unimproved," within 500 feet of the proposed location.

The subject site was previously used by Kingdom Life Ministries and is currently vacant. Past Google Streetview images show building signage for Blessed Ground International Ministries in 2013, and that a Rent-A-Center retail use was operating on this site in 2007, closing shortly thereafter.



2007 Google Streetview of Rent-A-Center Improvements



Bird's Eye View of Rezoning Area

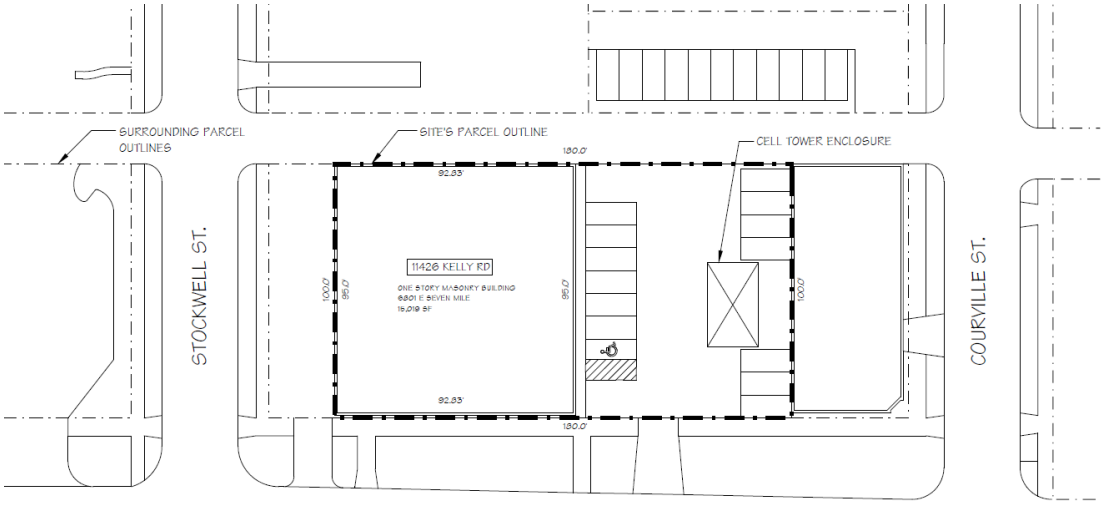
The City Planning Commission is included as a co-petitioner so that the parcel located at 11440 Kelly Road can be considered for B4 zoning. This parcel is under separate ownership by the City of Detroit and includes a small, grassed yard between the existing building and Stockwell Street to the north. Staff included this parcel due to its ownership, proximity to the adjacent building proposed for reuse, and its small size of 26 feet by 100 feet (0.06 acres) that limit the feasibility of developing this parcel on its own.



11440 Kelly Road from Stockwell St – CPC Co-petitioner

The applicant has submitted a site plan and building plans. The site proposed to be developed is 0.4 acres and includes a one-story masonry building 92 feet wide along the Kelly Road frontage and 97 feet deep (8,924 sq. ft.). No exterior improvements are proposed. Interior improvements include minor demolition and the addition of a sitting area, catering staging area, storage/office, restrooms, and a janitor's closet in the rear of the first floor. A mezzanine for storage is also proposed in the rear.

The below site plan indicates 25 off-street parking spaces on site and adjacent. A preliminary review of minimum parking requirements indicates that possibly 47 off-street parking spaces would be required to reuse this building as a rental hall. The reuse of this building, for rental hall or other retail purposes, would more than likely require approval of a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals to the minimum parking requirement.



Proposed Site Plan

CPC PUBLIC HEARING

At the May 7, 2026 CPC public hearing, there were no speakers directly in favor or in opposition to the project. One speaker, who indicated she was the president of a nearby block club, raised concerns that the building could become a strip club (possibly confusing a nearby strip club on Eight Mile), and with community outreach.

Staff has attempted to reach out to this individual on two occasions but has been unable to contact for a meeting regarding the project. Additionally, a Commissioner raised concerns for the apparent parking deficiency; however this would ultimately be decided by BSEED and could include the use of off-site shared parking of adjacent vacant commercial lots. Lastly, Commissioners asked for a comparison of permissible uses between the B3 and B4 districts. Attached is a comparison table between retail, service, and commercial uses in these two districts.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Zoning District Descriptions

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

B3 Shopping District (Current)

The B3 Shopping District provides for a range of convenience and comparison shopping goods stores, which are generally grouped into neighborhood and community shopping centers, depending on the size of the area so mapped. Uses permitted are inclusive enough to allow for the provision of a broad range of goods and services for the consumer, and to allow for as much freedom and healthy competition in the commercial real estate market and commercial activities as is commensurate with other community values.

B4 – General Business District (Proposed

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 Stockwell St):	B3 – Vacant former payday loan store
East (across alley):	R1 (Sngle Family)– Residential
South (same block):	B4 – C & H Fire Protection
West (across Kelly Rd):	B3 and B4 – T-Mobile retail store and vacant former furniture store

Master Plan Interpretation

The site is located in the Master Plan's Denby neighborhood. The current plan shows Mixed Town Center (MTC) for the site.

The Master Plan describes these areas *"…are activity centers for a Cluster. They are often located at the intersection of two major thoroughfares. Land uses include a commercial, entertainment and / or institutional anchor with a mix of support uses including or in close proximity to residential land uses. Town Centers are distinguished from other activity centers by an emphasis on pedestrian*

orientation with wide sidewalks, building facades built up to the lot line, street-front access to buildings and landscaping and street furniture (i.e. benches and planters).".

Master Plan policy 5.1 states: *"The existing built environment of commercial structures at the intersection of Kelly, Hayes and Houston-Whittier presents an opportunity for a mixed use, pedestrian-oriented development.". The zoning and developments in this area should be examined through this lens. Therefore, while the small scale of the rezoning will not change the overall character of the area and the rezoning is therefore generally consistent with the Master Plan, it has the potential to permit more non-pedestrian-oriented uses.*

The Planning and Development Department (P&DD) has submitted a letter that states the rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan.

Community Engagement Summary
Community organizations contacted by the applicant included the EKM Eastwood Black Club Association and the Whittier Business Association to inform them of the proposed rezoning and the anticipated reuse of the property as a rental hall with potential expanded commercial use. The applicant has also been attending community meetings held on the third Thursday of each month since November 2025 to engage directly with local stakeholders.

The petitioner indicates outreach was also conducted with nearby businesses and residents, including AL's Furniture, C & H Fire Protection, Cash Connection, and a nearby resident on Stockwell Street, to provide information about the proposal and allow for questions or feedback. The petitioner indicates overall feedback from community members has been positive, with no significant concerns raised during outreach efforts.

As part of ongoing community engagement, the applicant has committed that, upon approval of the rezoning, the property will host free community events approximately four times per year to provide continued benefit to the surrounding neighborhood.

Rezoning Approval Criteria
Section 50-3-70 of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance lists eight approval criteria on which zoning map amendments must be based. Below is CPC staff's analysis of the criteria.

1) Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend, or fact.
   Staff Analysis:
   The rezoning would help meet the challenge of repurposing an existing building that has been vacant for several years at the edge of a neighborhood business district with high vacancy of existing buildings.

2) Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Master Plan and the stated purposes of the zoning code.
   Staff Analysis:
   The Planning and Development Department (P&DD) has submitted a letter that states the rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan.

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.
   Staff Analysis:
   It is expected that the city and other service providers will be able to provide adequate public facilities and services to the site as it was recently used as a retail store.

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.
   Staff Analysis:
   No adverse impacts on the natural environment are anticipated as the building is existing and covers the majority of the site.

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.
   Staff Analysis:
   The site and greater area may no longer be suitable for the B3 district given the limited development activity that exists in this zoning district. The B2 and B4 are where the majority of commercial development activity occurs in the city, outside of the Central Business District B5 and other zoning. It is possible that rezoning from B3 to B4 will be necessary to support the redevelopment of this historic but vacant neighborhood business district. B4 zoning already exists to the south and west.

8) Whether the proposed rezoning will create and illegal "spot zone."
   Staff Analysis:
   The rezoning would not create an illegal spot zone as the rezoning is generally consistent with the Master Plan and denial of the request would not preclude the property from redevelopment.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the above review and findings, CPC staff recommends approval of the proposed rezoning.

Attachments: Proposed Plan Set
P&DD Master Plan Interpretation
Site Photos – May 2026

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