

Re: Detroit Thermal Application (App#HDC2025-00243)

Dear City of Detroit Historic District Commissioners,

I'm writing today as a resident of the City of Detroit and more specifically, the Lafayette Park neighborhood. In response to the application submitted by the private utility company Detroit Thermal (DT), I'm writing to voice my tremendously strong opposition towards the Commission granting the applicant either a: 1) Certificate of Appropriateness or 2) a Notice to Proceed.

The contents and proposal of this application submitted to HDC staff and presented to the HDC members is appalling. Their proposal to excavate landscape (both hard and soft), install new and replace existing decommissioned and decayed private utilities, and installing permanent steam stacks is an industrial-grade project. If granted approval and undertaken within the local and nationally recognized historic district of Lafayette Park this would generate a significant hostile impact and have the potential to adversely affect the National Historic Landmark (NHL) status granted to Lafayette Park and the City of Detroit in 2015.

Beyond the stated admissions of DT officials that other routing options exist to provide steam heat to 1300 E. Lafayette residents which lie completely outside of the Lafayette Park Historic District boundaries, a significant amount of historic preservation legislative guidance, codified ordinance, and preservation frameworks provide clear and concise reasoning why this application should be denied any sort of work approval from the HDC. A few of these are heightened below:

- The work proposed does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation, running contrary to at least three (3) stated standards.
- The work proposed does not meet the Secretary's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.
- Zero (0) of the four criteria located within the Detroit Code of Ordinances providing conditions to issue a NTP are met.
- The work would result in a direct adverse effect on the "Elements of Design for the LP Historic District", specifically 21-2-181 (d) 13. *Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments.*
- The application materials submitted are incomplete and do not fully detail the work proposed and the damage that will ensue.

Lafayette Park was an intentional and diligently planned and implemented neighborhood which has arguably surpassed all expectations, being granted NHL status (one of only 43 within the State of Michigan and one of 10 in the City of Detroit). Its success and stability are a testament

to the city, its residents, and the Lafayette Park community. Unnecessarily disrupting and disturbing this protected place will create irreparable harm and damage to the LP District.

This neighborhood was meant to reach mature status decades after being built and we are currently living in that era. The statements from DT officials that “the neighborhood landscape will be returned to its current form” is categorically impossible to achieve and misleading. One cannot return 50+ year mature landscapes (which have been damaged) back to their current form in any amount of time which is less than 50 years.

I am asking that the Detroit Historic District Commission follow the clear guidance provided by the City of Detroit code of ordinances, the Secretary of the Interior Standards, and common sense and reject Detroit Thermal’s application.

Thank you for serving the residents of Detroit and preserving the city’s historic places.

Sincerely,

Kevin Schronce

Kevin Schronce
1370 Nicolet Place
Detroit, MI 48207