

President Mary Sheffield

Detroit City Council

Re Detroit Thermal, LLC Project Impact on Lafayette Park Residential and Public Space

We wish to contest the construction work that Detroit Thermal, LLC, has launched to provide access to steam for the 1300 Lafayette Cooperative Apartments. Specifically, we are sending this letter in support of our own Joliet Place Town House Co-operative's protest of said project, and to spell out our particular concerns.

We trust that you have a clear picture of the concerns that the several historic Lafayette Co-operatives have raised in response to this project.

We believe too much leeway has been given to Detroit Thermal as a corporate interest. For them this is simply a business transaction for the sake of its lucrative gain. We believe that their drive to capitalize this project is unfairly overriding our interests as residents for our environmental health and welfare, and by extension, that of the wider community.

Our discomfort grows with the lack of clarity of who is the authentic owner of Detroit Thermal, LLC. We understand that it was acquired by Detroit Renewable Energy LLC in May, 2020. On the other hand, it appears that Vauban Infrastructure Partners are possibly the ultimate owner with an entity called DCO Energy as a key operational partner. Is our City government's oversight department clear about who is the contractor and whether said contractor is heeding protocol and satisfying policy and guidelines? Who's in charge?

Finally, we are alarmed that the canopy of multiple tree plantings, shrubbery and the open space that have had decades to mature alongside the residential structures developed in this area are taking an irreparable hit to their scale.

We are active birders who are stunned by the variety of species that depend on this urban patch. Think of them as canaries in the coal mine because they in fact provide a gauge of the healthiness of this area. What's good for the health of one community of Detroit is good for all Detroit's health. Letting Detroit Thermal compromise that health is unthinkable.

We in the Lafayette Town House Co-op district sympathize with our 1300 Lafayette Co-op neighbors and are committed to helping them find a way to finance a viable solution to their heating needs. We want to join with them to find resources to finance the boiler installation that eliminates the need for a steam alternative.

We urge you to inquire into the possibility that Detroit Thermal is offering to broker the financing of this capital project and not just the construction work to bring steam into the building. If such is the case, it raises even more concern for us about the incentive that could add to Detroit Thermal's interest in profiting from this project.

Sincerely,

Ronald and Jacqueline Spann

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