

From: [Angela Fortino](#)
To: [Historic District Commission \(Staff\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Deny the Detroit Thermal Application (HDC2025-00243) - Lafayette Park
Date: Monday, May 12, 2025 10:11:38 PM

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Detroit Thermal application (HDC2025-00243) for new steam infrastructure within the Lafayette Park National Historic Landmark (NHL) and Local Historic District.

As the National Park Service has noted (submitted to HDC), Lafayette Park is nationally significant as a pioneering urban renewal project. The proposed work has deeply alarmed my fellow residents, and analysis by architectural historian Cassandra Talley of Loggia Preservation (submitted to HDC) indicates that the application fails to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, particularly regarding cultural landscapes. The proposal includes the introduction of new and potentially disruptive elements to the landscape.

Specifically, I urge the Historic District Commission to deny the application for the following reasons:

- **Non-Compliance with Preservation Standards:** The proposed work does not comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation, particularly standards 2, 5, and 7.
- **Damage to Historic Landscape:** The project will damage or remove trees, plants, flower beds, and other historically significant landscape features.
- **Disregard for Cultural Landscape Guidelines:** The application ignores the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, which emphasize preserving the landscape's historic form and features.
- **Inadequate Research and Documentation:** The applicant has not demonstrated that they have adequately researched the site's history or conducted a thorough survey of the landscape.
- **Unnecessary Alterations:** The project involves unnecessary alterations to the historic landscape, and the applicant has not provided sufficient evidence that there are no viable alternatives.
- **Impact on Character-Defining Features:** The proposed introduction of new steam infrastructure, including vent stacks, will negatively impact the character-defining features of the historic district, such as the views and vistas carefully designed by Alfred Caldwell.
- **Lack of "Substantial Benefit":** The application does not demonstrate that the project will provide a "substantial benefit" to the community, as required for a Notice to Proceed.

Given the national significance of Lafayette Park and these significant concerns regarding the application's impact on its historic integrity, I urge the Historic District Commission to carefully consider these reasons and reject the current application.

Sincerely,

Angela NM Fortino

Board Member, LaSalle Cooperative