

From: [Meredith Baughman](#)
To: [Historic District Commission \(Staff\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Lafayette Park
Date: Monday, May 12, 2025 1:38:43 PM

Hi HDC,

I don't know if this is the correct channel, but I don't think I'll be able to attend the public meeting on Wednesday, so I'm writing to ask that you vote no on allowing Detroit Thermal to tear up Lafayette Park.

The landscape is a key feature of the design, and was done by Alexander Caldwell, who is probably the most celebrated landscape architect of the 20th century. The landscape in question is also private property, and there is some question as to whether the existing abandoned easements are truly public.

Lafayette Park is an incredibly significant site. It's touted as the only real successful example of urban renewal in the US, and it's the largest collection of Meis Van der Rhoë buildings in the world. Yes, you read that right, "in the world." Tourists regularly visit--even David Byrne of the Talking Heads says Lafayette Park is a must-do in Detroit.

Detroit Thermal claims they can do the work without damaging the landscape, and that anything damaged will be replaced. I urge you to walk around the park, and you'll see that would be impossible. Detroit Thermal said themselves that they would be using serious heavy machinery--a backhoe and bulldozer, to be specific.

Managing a co-op is hard, but 1300 could do an assessment to raise the funds they need. Anyone who lives in a co-op can tell you that special assessments are just part of the game. I am certain that they can find another way to address their heat and hot water issue. Whether that's with or without Detroit Thermal.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,
Meredith Baughman, LCSW