

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 updated application being presented by 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.

First and foremost, this application package continues to be factually incomplete and misleading. The plans contain multiple inaccuracies including many trees and shrubs being incorrectly identified and/or not identified at all, the failure to reference multiple historically designated landscape features within the project area and inadequately documenting the overall construction impacts if construction commenced. Given these significant omissions (either intentionally or by error), critical root zones which fall within the proposed construction area are not properly identified as well as what the long-term impacts to the historically protected "softscape" will be. **This application package is incomplete and any discussions and final determinations for approval of the proposed project are fundamentally flawed.** The Commission cannot make a motion to approve a project which is presenting factually inaccurate data and information.

Secondly, even within its inaccurate application being presented for a second time at the July 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing, the project still generates a significant adverse effect on Lafayette Park's historic landscape. The project will kill and damage mature trees that define the historic landscape, shrubs and planting beds. The project plans to convert the most sensitive and most beloved portion of this historic landscape into a work site. Project plans acknowledge damage to the landscape. The 60-year-old landscape cannot be "restored." It took 60 years of time, investment, and stewardship to become what it is today.

There's a strong reason to believe that 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. 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.

Lastly, and perhaps most significantly being overlooked, if granted approval, all future maintenance of this infrastructure **will not require** HDC approval. Failures to this infrastructure (which are bound to occur and for which DT is constantly conducting maintenance throughout downtown on their compromised assets) will be approved by virtue of DT's annual maintenance agreement with the City of Detroit. For instance, when the infrastructure fails or experiences issues, DT will have the right to access and conduct what they deem as "necessary measures" to fix. This will most likely result in future loss and damage to the historic landscape. A decision made by the commission in 2025, while having impacts far beyond 2045.

I am requesting the HDC deny this application based on its incompleteness as well as the clear guidance provided by the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the treatment of historic properties, and common sense.

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

Sincerely,  
Kevin Schronce  
1370 Nicolet Place