
[EXTERNAL] Opposition to Surface Parking Lot Proposal at 3116 Park

From Tim Hinkle <tim@timhinkle.io>

Date Wed 12/10/2025 6:32 AM

To Historic District Commission (Staff) <hdc@detroitmi.gov>

Dear Members of the Detroit Historic District Commission,

I am writing to you today on behalf of [Detroiters for Parking Reform](#), a grassroots organization advocating for a more equitable, sustainable downtown that puts space for people first. We represent residents, business owners and community stakeholders who value livable, walkable and aesthetically-pleasing urban environments.

We are writing specifically in opposition to the proposal concerning the property located at 3116 Park (Parcel ID: 3116-Park-0225-2025), which appears on the list of properties considered by the Bridging Neighborhoods Program and seeks preliminary approval or a conditional use permit related to the development of a surface parking lot.

While we respect the property owner's right to develop their land, Detroiters for Parking Reform has serious concerns about the negative impacts of surface parking lots, particularly in a designated historic district like the one encompassing this property. We believe the pursuit of a surface parking lot at this location would be detrimental to the neighborhood's character, aesthetics, and overall urban vitality.

Our opposition is based on the following key points:

- 1. Erosion of the Character of the Peterboro-Charlotte Historic District:** Surface parking lots clash dramatically with the architectural character and scale of historic Detroit neighborhoods. They introduce large, flat expanses of asphalt and vehicle storage that detract significantly from the streetscape and the surrounding historic buildings. This type of development is fundamentally incompatible with the principles of historic preservation and neighborhood enhancement.
- 2. Encroachment on Pedestrian Space:** Surface parking lots consume valuable public right-of-way and reduce the space available for pedestrians, cyclists and the vibrant street life that makes Detroit's neighborhoods unique. They often result in wider setbacks and additional curb-cuts, making sidewalks more cramped, less safe and less inviting.
- 3. Inefficient Land Use:** In an urban context, allocating large tracts of land for surface parking is often an inefficient use of space. The land could be better utilized for affordable housing, retail, community facilities or more aesthetically pleasing and functional parking solutions (like multi-level garages or creative surface parking designs) that prioritize neighborhood benefits.
- 4. Urban Decay:** Surface parking lots can contribute to urban decay. They tend to attract illicit activities and crime, and detract from property values (both adjacent and the property itself) and create a less desirable environment for residents and visitors alike.

We understand that property owners have legitimate needs for access and parking. However, Detroiters for Parking Reform believes that meeting these needs does not necessarily require the development of large, visually intrusive surface parking lots in the historic fabric of our city. There are often more sustainable, community-friendly, and aesthetically sound alternatives that can be pursued.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the Detroit Historic District Commission carefully consider the negative impacts of surface parking lots on the historic character and quality of life in our neighborhoods. We urge the Commission to evaluate this proposal with a strong preference for alternatives that align with the goals of historic preservation, neighborhood improvement, and sustainable urban development.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. We look forward to the Commission's deliberation and decision.

Sincerely,

Tim Hinkle

On behalf of [Detroits for Parking Reform](#)
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