

SUMMARY

This ordinance amends Chapter 21, Article II, of the 2019 Detroit City Code by adding Section 21-2-238 to establish the Aretha Franklin Amphitheater/Chene Park Historic District, and to define the elements of design for the district.

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1 BY COUNCIL MEMBER _____:

2 AN ORDINANCE to amend Chapter 21, Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code
3 by adding Section 21-2-238 to establish the Aretha Franklin Amphitheater/Chene Park
4 Historic District and to define the elements of design for the district.

5 IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT
6 THAT:

7 Section 1. Chapter 21, Article II, of the 2019 Detroit City Code be amended by
8 adding Section 21-2-238 to read as follows:

9 **Sec. 21-2-238. Aretha Franklin Amphitheater/Chene Park Historic District.**

10 (a) A historic district to be known as the Aretha Franklin Amphitheater/Chene
11 Park Historic District is established in accordance with the provisions of this article.

12 (b) This historic district designation is certified as being consistent with the
13 Detroit Master Plan.

14 (c) The boundaries of the Aretha Franklin Amphitheater/Chene Park Historic
15 District are as shown on the map on file in the office of the City Clerk, and are as
16 follows: The northeast and southwest boundaries are co-determinate with the northwest
17 and southwest boundaries, extended northwest and southeast, of the parcel described as:
18 S E ATWATER W 124.50 FT OF CHENE FARM P C 733 LYG S OF AND ADJ
19 ATWATER ST 50 FT WD 11/4 1 THRU 5BLK 1 SUB OF PT JAMES CAMPAU
20 FARME 1/2 OF P C 91 L2 P17 PLATS, W C R 9/1 ALSO THAT PT OF THE DUBOIS
21 FARM W 1/2 OF P C 91 LYG S OF E ATWATER ST 50 FT WD 9/11 403. The
22 northwest boundary is the centerline of East Atwater Street. The southeast boundary is
23 the Detroit harbor line. Commonly known as 2200/2600 East Atwater Street.

24 (d) The defined elements of design, as provided for in Section 21-2-2 of this
25 code, are as follows:

1 (1) Height. The buildings at 2200/2600 East Atwater Street consists of a one
2 (1) story rectangular ticket booth, a one (1) story oval merchandising
3 building, a five (5) level pavilion made up of a series of circular cylinders
4 for concession, restroom, and event facilities, a one (1) story
5 administration building, an approximately seventy (70) foot high
6 amphitheater and stage structure constructed on top of a forty (40) foot
7 high manmade hill (the stage is elevated approximately two (2) feet), and
8 two art objects approximately ten (10) feet high each.

9 (2) Proportion of building's front façades. All buildings are wider than tall on
10 all elevations. The pavilion is approximately fifty-three (53) feet by one
11 hundred and thirty (130) feet in a slightly arched shape, and features
12 numerous round cylinder shaped buildings and structures assembled in an
13 asymmetrical stepped pattern surrounding its main entrance with a total of
14 five (5) levels. The stepped pattern adds a vertical emphasis to the
15 building façade.

16 (3) Proportion of openings within the façades. The ticket booth building is
17 composed of approximately eighty percent (80%) openings in its front
18 façade (northwest elevation). The merchandising building has one opening
19 that is approximately seventy five percent (75%) of its front façade (north
20 elevation). The administration building is composed of approximately fifty
21 percent openings in its front façade (southeast elevation). The pavilion
22 building is composed of approximately seventy five percent (75%)
23 asymmetrical openings in its front façade (south elevation). The
24 amphitheater structure is one hundred percent (100%) open on its entire
25 circumference and covered by a tensile structure.

1 (4) Rhythm of solids to voids in the front façades. A regular rhythm of solids
2 to voids exists on all elevations of the ticket building. An irregular rhythm
3 of solids to voids exists on all elevations of the merchandising, pavilion,
4 and administration buildings. A single void occupies the merchandising
5 building facade. The pavilion voids are irregularly placed: some voids act
6 as window, doorways, and viewing points. The voids are full length
7 starting approximately three (3) feet from the floor. The administration
8 building has minimal voids on the entire surface of the semicircular façade
9 of the building. There is a recessed surface with a single door on the far
10 right side of the recess. A row of three (3) fixed square panes flank the
11 south side of the recessed entry and two sets of three (3) fixed square
12 panes flank the north side of the recessed entry. There are single doorway
13 voids on the south and west elevations.

14 (5) Rhythm of spacing of buildings on streets. Spacing of buildings is based
15 on the necessity of the logistics for the entertainment venue to provide
16 access and security. The pavilion is directly adjacent to the amphitheater,
17 providing an entrance for the stage and service areas. One (1) building, the
18 ticket booth, is directly adjacent to the street.

19 (6) Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections. The roof of the ticket booth
20 projects approximately two (2) feet from the façade (northeast elevation)
21 and is unsupported. The merchandising building roof projects
22 approximately three (3) feet on its façade (east elevation) and is
23 unsupported. The entrance to the administrative building is recessed into
24 the façade (southeast elevation) approximately three (3) feet for a length

1 of approximately ten (10) feet. No consistent rhythm of entrance and/or
2 porch projections exist amongst the buildings.

3 (7) Relationship of materials. The building materials are generally composed
4 of concrete. The tensile roof consists of a Teflon coated plastic membrane.
5 The roof of the tensile structure is supported by concrete columns and
6 steel poles: the structure above the stage creates a stage house base for
7 anchoring the tensile structure. Landscape elements including sidewalk,
8 planters, and retaining walls are concrete. Lighting fixtures outside the
9 amphitheater area, benches, signage, and trash receptacles are metal
10 mounted on concrete bases.

11 (8) Relationship of textures. The ticket booth building displays an overall
12 smooth texture. The merchandising building has a slightly textured upper
13 surface rising from an approximately two (2) foot base with a heavier
14 textured vertical oriented pattern found on the surface of the pavilion and
15 on many of the landscape retaining walls and stair risers and is
16 intentionally similar to the surface of the Renaissance Center (General
17 Motors Building). The pavilion consists of the same heavily textured
18 vertical concrete surface resembling the texture of the Renaissance Center.
19 The heavily textured vertical concrete surfaces are found on the concrete
20 planters incorporated into the pavilion and the facing of the stairway
21 risers.

22 (9) Relationship of colors. The ticket booth building is painted in green with
23 black accents. Walkways associated with the Entry Plaza, Mall, and
24 Festival Plaza consist of bands of tri-colored circular and wave patterns of
25 naturally colored gray concrete with accents of black, dark beige, and

1 white banding. The artwork *Carnival* originally painted green, blue, and
2 red is now painted light gray. The merchandising building upper surface is
3 dark beige and the textured base is a natural colored gray concrete. The
4 fencing, handrails, and lighting in the amphitheater are painted the same
5 green as the ticket booth. The artwork *Lattice Form* is painted white. The
6 concrete surfaces of the amphitheater and the immediate surrounding
7 walkways are a naturally colored gray. Fixed seating is white. The roof is
8 a white membrane. The administrative building is white.

9 (10) *Relationship of architectural details.* Irregularly arranged, repetitive
10 cylinder shape details of various heights are found throughout the property
11 especially along the riverfront and cascading from the top of the pavilion
12 to its base where a water feature was once installed. Cylinder shapes are
13 arranged in an asymmetrical modern style spare of details. The primary
14 facade (north elevation) of the pavilion is dominated by rough textured
15 concrete with vertical textured design elements. Concrete stair risers
16 repeat the same vertical textures. The amphitheater design intent is to
17 allow the audience views of the river and the stage is located near the edge
18 of the river with the entertainers facing away (north) from the river. The
19 administrative building utilizes a vertically laid stack bond that
20 emphasizes a vertical architectural element.

21 (11) *Relationship of roof shapes.* The roof over the ticket booth, merchandising
22 building, pavilion, and administrative building are flat. The tensile
23 structure roof over the amphitheater begins over the stage area and
24 expands in a fan shape up the side of the amphitheater to the top of the

1 hill, three interior support towers create a rise in three (3) places in the
2 roof.

3 (12) Walls of continuity. Landscaped planters and retaining walls are of the
4 same vertically oriented textured concrete as the walls of the pavilion and
5 integrated into the landscape to provide a wall of continuity. The vertical
6 light standards, fencing, and planted trees, where they exist, result in
7 expressions of continuity.

8 (13) Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments.
9 Mature trees are found on the east elevation and surrounding the
10 amphitheater. Mature shrubbery are located throughout all elevations
11 along the building footprint and paved walkways. The Entry Plaza, Mall
12 and Festival Plaza, and sidewalks along the pond are flanked with grass.
13 The hill beyond the fixed seating of the amphitheater is covered in grass.
14 and berms on the east and west sides of the parcel are covered with grass.
15 Collections of low level multi-height cylinder shaped landscaping features
16 are arranged along the riverfront and within the landscaped areas and
17 some include the vertical texturizing found on the outside of the pavilion
18 and stair risers. A seven (7) foot high metal fence provides a security
19 buffer along the front of the property and at each end of the pond and does
20 not contribute because it is a feature installed outside the period of
21 significance. A new electronic changeable sign, erected in 2019, near the
22 Entry Plaza does not contribute to significance. The lighting fixtures,
23 benches, and metal bollards that were replaced after 1990 period of
24 significance.

1 (14) Relationship of open space to structures. Open space exists in the broad,
2 grassy lawn, and mature landscaping. A large manmade pond buffers the
3 amphitheater from East Atwater Street. The amphitheater is covered by a
4 tensile roof that allows the entire periphery of the amphitheater and stage
5 to be open to the scenic views of the riverfront and mature landscape.
6 Walkways are flat in publicly accessible areas. Small sections of ramping
7 are present on each side of the stage for accessibility to the stage.
8 Stairways are utilized to provide access into the pavilion and
9 amphitheater seating area. A driveway ending at a small parking area is
10 located to the west side of the property to provide access to the
11 administration building and the Detroit Water and Sewage Department
12 building.

13 (15) Scale of façades and façade elements. The building façades are of a scale
14 typical to be secondary to the large-scaled amphitheater structure. The
15 façade of the pavilion is directly adjacent to the amphitheater structure and
16 horizontally dominates the entrance area of the amphitheater.

17 (16) Directional expression of front elevations. The front elevation of the ticket
18 booth, and the merchandising building, are horizontal in expression due to
19 the one-story with flat roof construction. The administrative building is
20 horizontally expressed, but suggests a vertical expression due to the
21 vertically stacked bond brick pattern. The pavilion is vertical in expression
22 due to the arrangement of tall cylinder structures rising five (5) levels up
23 the hill directly adjacent to the amphitheater. The amphitheater possesses a
24 diagonal expression, beginning at the base of the hill at the stage level and

1 moving in a westerly diagonal direction up to the top of the forty (40) foot
2 hill.

3 (17) Rhythm of building setbacks. No rhythm of building setbacks is created
4 within the park-like setting.

5 (18) Relationship of lot coverages. The buildings occupy less than thirty
6 percent (30%) of its lot, with a broad grassy lawn with landscape
7 treatments surrounding all buildings.

8 (19) Degree of complexity within the façades. A low degree of complexity is
9 found at façade openings of the ticket office, merchandising building, and
10 administrative building main entrances; door and window openings
11 throughout are unadorned. A subtle but high degree of complexity is found
12 in the architectural details of the pavilion due to the stacked nature of the
13 cylinder shapes that create a tower of cylindrical elements with vertical
14 texture.

15 (20) Orientation, vistas, overviews. The primary orientation of all buildings,
16 amphitheater and stage structure, and objects are designed to maximize
17 views of the Detroit River and Canada (facing south). The ticket booth
18 building and Exit Plaza are oriented to face East Atwater Street (facing
19 north). The pavilion openings provide frames for viewing the mature
20 landscape and water features. The amphitheater provides patrons vistas of
21 the Detroit River and is the backdrop for the stage. The parcel was
22 designed to engage and connect people with the natural beauty of the
23 riverfront with the City of Detroit as its backdrop by placing mature trees
24 into the landscape.

1 (21) Symmetric or asymmetric appearance. The arrangement of buildings,
2 structure and objects are asymmetric because it was consciously designed
3 by the landscape architect to maximize views of the Detroit River and
4 landscape.

5 (22) General environmental character. The district consists of a multi-building
6 entertainment venue that's interrelationship is to enjoy the entertainment
7 complimented within its natural environment. Walkways are organically
8 arranged to invite people to meander and stop to enjoy views of the water
9 and landscaping elements. The surrounding area directly adjacent consists
10 mostly of vacant lots used for patron parking. There are scattered
11 commercial buildings along East Atwater Street between Chene and
12 Joseph Campau Streets. Immediately adjacent to both east and west sides
13 of the parcel are parcels undergoing development as additional outdoor
14 recreation venues that will provide a consistent link of riverfront parks
15 connected by a pathway to be utilized by the public.

16 **Section 2.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances, or resolutions, in conflict with
17 this ordinance are repealed.

18 **Section 3.** This ordinance is declared necessary for the preservation of the public
19 peace, health, safety, and welfare of the people of the City of Detroit.

20 **Section 4.** If this ordinance is passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of City
21 Council members serving, it shall be given immediate effect and shall become effective
22 upon publication in accordance with Section 4-118(1) of the 2012 Detroit City Charter;
23 otherwise, it shall become effective in accordance with Section 4-118(2) of the 2012
24 Detroit City Charter.

1 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Lawrence T. Garcia

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Lawrence T. Garcia

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Corporation Counsel