

Alton James  
Chairperson  
Lauren Hood, MCD  
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.  
Director

**City of Detroit**  
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Brenda Goss Andrews  
Damion W. Ellis  
David Esparza, AIA, LEED  
Gregory Pawlowski  
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.  
Angy Webb  
Henry Williams

**Regular Meeting**  
**May 21, 2020 at 5:00 PM**

**Virtual Meeting Via Video Conferencing**

## **MINUTES**

### **I. Opening**

- A. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Hood at 5:21p.m.
- B. Roll Call – Marcell Todd, Director CPC called the roll. A quorum was present.

**Attendees: Andrews, Ellis (5:23 pm), Esparza, Hood, Webb, Williams and James (5:37 pm).**

**Excused: Pawlowski**

- C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

**Commissioner Andrews motioned approval of the agenda for the May 21, 2020 meeting; seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion approved.**

### **II. Minutes**

- A. Meeting minutes of January 23, 2020 and February 6, 2020 brought back from the meeting of March 5, 2020.

**Commissioner Andrews motioned approval of minutes for January 23, 2020 and February 6, 2020 meetings; seconded by Commissioner Esparza. Motion approved.**

### **III. Public Hearings and Presentations**

- A. **Presentation** – Planning and Development Department update, Katy Trudeau, Deputy Director

Deputy Director, Katy Trudeau provided a brief update of the current operations in the Planning and Development Department. Since, Governor Whitmer's Executive Order has been in place, the Planning and Development Department has been working remotely. The department has taken a brief pause from conducting neighborhood and planning studies and taken two months off from doing direct community engagement around

planning studies and development projects due to the pandemic. As construction limitations have been lifted due to additional executive orders from the governor, the department will ease their way back into doing community engagement and anticipate a published document for best practices around remote community engagements.

The department has successfully been able to move the Historic District Commission meetings to Zoom where two meetings have been held. It has also been active in pursuing Federal Stimulus Funding. The City of Detroit has already received an allocation for Community Development Block Grant that's intended to be spent on Covid response. Planning and Development is working closely with the Housing and Revitalization Department on that funding; and working hard to get as much additional funding out of the *Cares Act* for Detroit. The department recognizes that once the pandemic is over, a number of development projects may have some financial feasibility issues, so they are trying to find additional resources that will allow these projects to continue.

The department is trying to identify sources of funding to keep projects going forward without further revenue impacts on the city's budget. The department is on a team, led by the Mayor's Office, in partnership with the Department of Public Works, looking at ways in which the city can temporarily elevate permitting requirements around the public right of ways to support and enable businesses to use the public right of ways to operate their businesses through street closures or sidewalk activations. The department has been participating in national calls with other cities relative to best practices regarding potential economic stimulus to help and support vulnerable residents and the Neighborhood Framework Planning Process and the Strategic Neighborhood Fund Initiative is on-going.

Russell Baltimore, Design Director, PDD staff continuing to do design reviews, working all day; number of preliminary plan reviews. The interest in development in Detroit is still strong. Developers eager to get back to work.

*Commissioner Andrews requested more information relative to the Community Block Grant funding through Federal Stimulus Funding.*

Katy Trudeau – Covid Special CDBG funds have been awarded as part of the Cares Act designed for emergency Covid response. City has been awarded 20 million for emergency response activities. There are additional funding proposed in the amount of 2 billion dollars that has not yet been awarded and PDD, along with Housing and Revitalization and the Mayor's Office are trying to get some of that funding; currently not aware of how the city will be able to use that funding.

*Vice Chairperson Hood: Questioned whether PDD back at full capacity.*

Katy Trudeau – Not yet back operating in the office; depending on the status of the Governor's Office, expecting a small staff to report back on June 1<sup>st</sup>. The full staff was moved to work share status.

*Vice Chairperson Hood – The existing projects are all on track?*

Katy Trudeau – Yes, identified projects funded by the City's Capital budget have been placed on hold. Some projects funding out of bond proceeds are still on track.

*Vice Chairpeson Hood: Some developers are still going on with their projects, are people still interested in living in those residential projects, like they were before the pandemic?*

Katy Trudeau – There has not been as much demand; the development community is still eager to continue their projects. In Neighborhood Framework Studies include market analysis and the department has put those analysis on hold.

*Commissioner Esparza: Regarding Covid 19 dollars, is the intent to streamline identifying receipts to get the funding to them as soon as possible?*

Katy Trudeau – Speaking on behalf of the Housing and Revitalization Department, who are the receipts of those dollars, we are trying to utilize networks of public service organizations and non-profit to make sure those dollars get to response activity. The Housing and Revitalization Department would be able to respond more completely as they are developing strategies for deploying those dollars.

*Commissioner Esparza – How are other cities communicating with communities do not speak English and it is not their first language?*

Katy Trudeau – Has not heard the specific issue raised but she is a member of other networks of other planning directors and she is willing to put that forward.

*Chairperson James – Ms. Trudeau will be coming back to provide more updates in the future.*

Marcell Todd, Director, CPC – That is correct, Ms. Trudeau has indicated she is planning to have a regular schedule of appearances with this body and willing to work more cooperatively than we have in the past.

- B. Presentation Special District Review** – to consider request of SDG Associates, LLC on behalf of the Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority for PC/PCA (Public Center/Public Center Adjacent) Special District Review of proposed signs and trash compactor enclosure at the TCF Center at 1 Washington Boulevard (formerly Cobo Center).

Jamie Murphy, CPC Staff, provided an overview of report dated May 18, 2020. The City Planning Commission is in a receipt of a request from SDG Associates, LLC, on behalf of the Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority for PC/PCA (Public Center/Public Center Adjacent) Special District Review of proposed signs and trash compactor enclosure at the TCF Center.

The request is the result of the rebranding of *Cobo Center* as the *TCF Center*. The proposal is to change signage and install new signs, focusing on exterior identification signs (interior signage does not require PC/PCA Review). The new exterior signage is proposed in four (4) locations:

Three (3) signs above the entrances on the eastern façade of the building where the large red *Cobo* signs were previously located.

One (1) sign on the roof of the ballroom, which will not be visible from the ground as this sign is not visible from the public right-of-way and is not evaluated as a sign.

Three (3) options are being considered at the northeast entrance to the building near the intersection of Washington Blvd. and Congress Street; either above or below the animated display. Option 2 to attach the sign to the wall near the roof line is preferred.

Three signs are proposed on the ballroom near the roof line, each facing north, south and east. No signage has existed in this location.

A dumpster specially designed for compacting was installed, located in a sealed temperature controlled area to minimize odors, resulting in a loss of space in the loading dock. A trash compactor needs to be located outside the loading dock area near Atwater Street. A screen wall is proposed to conceal the compactor and a pergola will screen the view from above. Planting will surround the pergola and the screening wall.

The Planning and Development Department has submitted a letter recommending approval of the proposed changes.

Geoffrey Harrison, petitioner representing SDG Associates, LLC and the Authority provided a brief PowerPoint Presentation relative to the proposal. The rebranding was a competitive agreement; 109 existing signs remain unchanged; 93 signs have only text changes; three major signs were deleted that had the *Cobo* name; and eight signs were installed and these signs will be internally illuminated.

Petitioner reiterated the request as follows: Approval of comprehensive signage plan, specially approval of the 93 existing signs having only text change; approval of six added signs on Washington Blvd. and ballroom approval at ballroom roof concept, giving staff the authority to approve final design; stated preference on northeast corner; giving staff authority to approve final design.

The Authority has a lease with the City and the TCF signage will remain for 15 years.

#### Staff recommendation

CPC staff recommends approval of the proposed signs and trash compactor enclosure based on compliance with PC/PCA District Review criteria list in Sections 50-11-67 and 50-11-97 of the Zoning Ordinance; including items included in the petitioner's complete approval request.

**Commissioner Andrews motioned to accept staff's recommendation for approval, including items included in the petitioner's complete approval request; seconded by Commissioner Williams. Motion approved.**

- C. **Presentation Site Plan Review** – to consider Request of Doug Quada to approve site plans and elevations for a Planned Development (PD) zoning classification on District Map No. 4 of Chapter 50, Article XVII of the 2019 Detroit City Code, for the Henry Glover mansion commonly referred to as 229 and 239 Edmund Place, to construct a carriage home with residential space and parking. Additionally to allow for green space on the site.

Kimani Jeffrey, CPC Staff, provided a summary of the report dated May 12, 2020 regarding the request from Doug Quada for approval of site plans and elevations for a Planned Development (PD) on parcels commonly known at 229 and 239 Edmund Place. CPC approved the original site plans and elevations for the rehabilitation and additions of two (2) residential units at 229 Edmund Place in 2018.

The petitioner's current proposal is to construct a two-story carriage house which will include six condominiums with individual parking stalls on the first story, a 1,800 square foot residential unit on the second story and green space at 229 and 235 Edmund Place. The subject property is located in the Lower Woodard Area of Neighborhood Cluster #4. The future land use designation for the subject parcels indicates Mixed Residential Commercial (MRC) on the subject parcel and is consistent with the designation.

Doug Quada, petitioner, provided additional information relative to his request. Pending approvals, petitioner anticipates pouring footers for the carriage house in early August; plans to make property very green, with mature trees. He plans four (4) additional parking spaces dependent on tenant demand; if not will provide additional green space. Reclaimed materials from the deconstruction will be used and will install a roof top deck.

**Staff Recommendation**

The CPC staff recommends approval of the proposed development based on staff review, consistency with the Brush Park Modified Development Plan, the PD design criteria in Section 50-11-15 of the Zoning Ordinance and the following two (2) conditions:

1. The developer shall work with the immediately adjacent community to minimize disruption to the neighborhood during construction and address impacts that may arise.
2. The final site plans, elevations, lighting, landscape and signage plans be submitted by the developer to CPC staff for review and approval prior to making application for applicable permits.

**Commissioner Webb motioned to accept staff recommendation for approval with conditions; seconded by Commissioner Williams. Motion approved.**

- D. **Presentation** – CPC Status Report (Staff)

Marcell Todd, Director, CPC provided a general status report relative to the current circumstances of the CPC staff and staff of the Legislative Policy Division (LPD) which

services the Commission, the Historic Designation Advisory Board, the Detroit Entertainment Commission and the City Council.

Due to two (2) staff members being Covid survivors, the office space was quarantined and had to be cleaned and tested before staff received authorization to return to the office. As a result, staff has been working from home. The four divisions within LPD have been functioning and sharing the load; and have been able to serve the Commissions, Board, the Council and the public. Now we are able to meet virtually and hopefully plan to begin to have virtual office hours to give the public more access via video conferencing on Wednesdays, two (2) hours in the morning and two (2) hours in the afternoon. We will then look to expand those hours and provide other services utilizing the *Zoom software*.

Updates of various projects included a request for demolition of parcel located at 561 E. Jefferson; the status of amendments to the Sign Ordinance sponsored by Council Member Scott Benson; the proposed charette regarding zoning amendment for the former BelAir Shopping Center on East Eight Mile; General Service Department's proposal for Historic Fort Wayne; amendments to the Master Plan; pending presentation regarding Form Based Code and status of Code Studio's Zone Detroit Analytic.

**IV. Unfinished Business - None**

**V. New Business - None**

**VI. Committee Reports - None**

**VII. Member Reports - None**

**VIII. Communications - None**

**IX. Public Comment – None**

**Chairperson James recognized the sign language interperators**

**X. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:16 pm**