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# City of Detroit

**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
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June 20, 2022

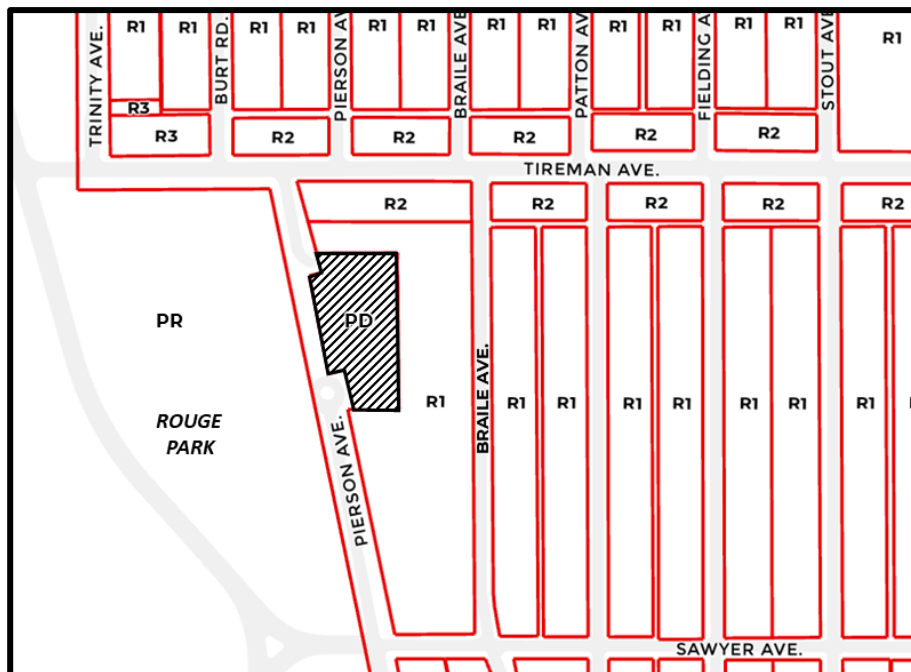
## HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

**RE:** Request of DTE Energy to show an R5 (Medium Density Residential) zoning district where a PD (Planned Development) zoning district is currently shown for one parcel commonly known at 7800 Pierson Street generally bounded by Tireman Avenue to the north, Braile Street to the east, Sawyer Street to the south, and Pierson Street to the west. **(RECOMMEND APPROVAL)**

## PROPOSAL

The City Planning Commission (CPC) has received a request from DTE Energy to amend District Map No. 78 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show an R5 (Medium Density Residential) zoning district where a PD (Planned Development) zoning district is currently shown for the property located at 7800 Pierson Street generally bounded by Tireman Avenue to the north, Braile Street to the east, Sawyer Street to the south, and Pierson Street to the west.

The site is located in City Council District 7 and measures 1.85 acres. It was previously the site of an apartment building which was demolished in approximately 2014.



## **BACKGROUND**

DTE has been working to improve the reliability of electrical service by increasing its tree trimming program. When tree branches grow around and over the power lines, there is a greater chance that they will fall on the lines and interrupt service. By regularly pruning back vegetation, these outages can be prevented. DTE employs properly-trained, journeyman tree trimmers to perform this service. Due to a shortage of candidates to fill these jobs, DTE partnered with the City of Detroit, Focus HOPE and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) to create a tree trimming academy. The training program is six weeks long and the jobs initially pay \$16 per hour with the possibility of \$30 per hour in 2½ years.

This particular site was selected largely due to its location at the edge of Rouge Park. An extensive clean-up was needed as the site had been used for illegal dumping for several years. The facility was permitted on a temporary basis and opened in Summer 2021. The proposed map amendment is being requested to permit the existing training facility for tree trimmers on a more permanent basis. The existing PD district permits only the multiple-family dwelling that previously occupied the site; the proposed R5 zoning district allows the trade school use by-right subject to development standards such as parking and screening.

The CPC also considered the possibility of modifying the provisions of the existing PD to allow the trade school use, but the development doesn't meet several of the criteria for PD districts. Specifically, the parcel does not meet the two acre minimum requirement and the development is allowable in several other zoning districts. Additionally, the PD would not comply with the Master Plan as the major land use of Retail, Service, and Commercial would not correspond with the designated Master Plan category of Residential.

## **CPC MEETINGS**

### ***Public Hearing – March 3, 2022***

On March 3, 2022, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing on this rezoning request. At the hearing, two members of the public spoke—both in support. No letters of support or opposition were received.

### ***Recommendation & Action – March 17, 2022***

The City Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the rezoning.

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

### ***Surrounding Zoning and Land Use***

The zoning classification and land uses surrounding the subject area are as follows:

North: R1 (Single Family Residential) – Single Family Houses

East: R1 – Single Family Houses

South: R1 – Single Family Houses

West: PR (Parks and Recreation) – Rouge Park

*Aerial view of proposed rezoning*

Although the facility trains people to trim trees, the noise generated is minimal. Most of the onsite instruction is indoor classroom work and learning to climb using safety equipment. The noisiest portion of the instruction is the tree chipper training which occurs approximately ½ day per month.



### ***Zoning Ordinance Approval Criteria***

Section 50-3-70 of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance lists eight approval criteria on which zoning map amendments must be based. Following are the relevant criteria with CPC staff's analysis in italics:

- Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend, or fact. *The existing PD zoning classification is defunct as it authorizes the apartment building that previously occupied the site. While the PD could be updated for the current use, the parcel does not meet the size requirement for a PD (2 acre minimum) and the development is allowable in several other zoning districts.*
- Whether the proposed amendment will have significant adverse impacts on other property that is in the vicinity of the subject tract. *No significant impacts on nearby property is anticipated. Most of the activity at the site is classroom learning and climbing instruction. Saws are not generally used onsite unless specific trees require pruning—cutting practice moves around to trees that need trimming. When the site was vacant, it became a target for illegal dumping; having an active use there is beneficial to the surrounding area by deterring illegal activity.*
- Whether the proposed rezoning will create an illegal “spot zone.” *Although there isn't other property zoned R5 in the vicinity, the parcel proposed to be rezoned is 1.85 acres which is fairly large compared to the surrounding residential lots. Also, while the R5 district allows*

*additional uses and density than the existing R2 district, both are residential districts that permit consistent uses and require similar setbacks.*

***Master Plan Consistency***

The subject site is located within the Rouge area of Neighborhood Cluster 7 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies. The Future Land Use map for this area shows “RL – Low Density Residential” for the subject property. The Planning and Development Department (PDD) has reviewed this proposed rezoning and determined that the R5 district will not change the overall character of the area and is generally consistent with the Master Plan. The alternate proposal to modify the existing PD district does not comply with Section 50-11-13 of the Zoning Ordinance because the major land use (Retail, Service, and Commercial) does not correspond with the general Master Plan land use category (Residential).

***Community Input***

DTE has been engaging with the community over the past several years beginning with the potential selection of the site and continuing through the present, now that the facility is operating. The Friends of Rouge Park and Warrendale Community Organization have been particularly supportive.

**CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION**

On March 17, 2022, the City Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the rezoning request to amend Article XVII, District Map 78 of Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, to show a R5 (Medium Density) zoning classification where a PD (Planned Development) zoning classification is currently shown for the property located at 7800 Pierson Street.

Respectfully submitted,

LAUREN HOOD, CHAIRPERSON



Marcell R. Todd, Jr., Director  
Jamie J. Murphy, Staff

Attachments: Rezoning Ordinance  
PDD Master Plan Interpretation  
Updated District Map 78

cc: Antoine Bryant, Director, PDD  
Karen Gage, PDD  
Greg Moots, PDD  
David Bell, Director, BSEED  
James Foster, BSEED  
Conrad Mallett, Corporation Counsel  
Kim James, Law Department  
Daniel Arking, Law Department

## **SUMMARY**

This ordinance amends Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, by amending Article XVII, *Zoning District Maps*, Section 50-17-80, *District Map No. 78*, to revise the zoning classification for the parcel commonly identified as 7800 Pierson Street from the existing PD Planned Development District zoning classification to the R5 Medium Density Residential District zoning classification and to repeal the regulations for development associated with the existing PD Planned Development District zoning district.

1 **BY COUNCIL MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_** :

2 **AN ORDINANCE** to amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, by  
3 amending Article XVII, *Zoning District Maps*, Section 50-17-80, *District Map No. 78*, to revise  
4 the zoning classification for the parcel commonly identified as 7800 Pierson Street from the  
5 existing PD Planned Development District zoning classification to the R5 Medium Density  
6 Residential District zoning classification and to repeal the regulations for development associated  
7 with the existing PD Planned Development District zoning district.

8 **IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT THAT:**

9 **Section 1.** Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, Article XVII, *Zoning District*  
10 *Maps*, Section 50-17-80, *District Map No. 78*, is amended as follows:

11 **CHAPTER 50. ZONING**

12 **ARTICLE XVII. ZONING DISTRICT MAPS**

13 **Sec. 50-17-80. District Map No. 78.**

14 For the property commonly identified as 7800 Pierson Street, generally bounded by  
15 Tireman Avenue to the north, Braile Street to the east, Sawyer Street to the south, and Pierson  
16 Street to the west, and identified more specifically as:

17 E PIERSON 578 THRU 567 E 35 FT OF VAC PIERSON AVE ADJ TO W LINE OF LOTS 575  
18 THRU 569 & S 17.4 FT OF 568 EXC E 200 FT OF LOTS 578 THRU 569, EXC E 202 FT OF  
19 568 EXC E 200 FT OF 567 & EXC W 15 FT AT RA TO E LINE OF PIERSON AVE OF LOTS  
20 578 THRU 576 FRISCHKORNS PARKDALE SUB L45 P36 PLATS, W C R 22/279 81,285 SQ  
21 FT

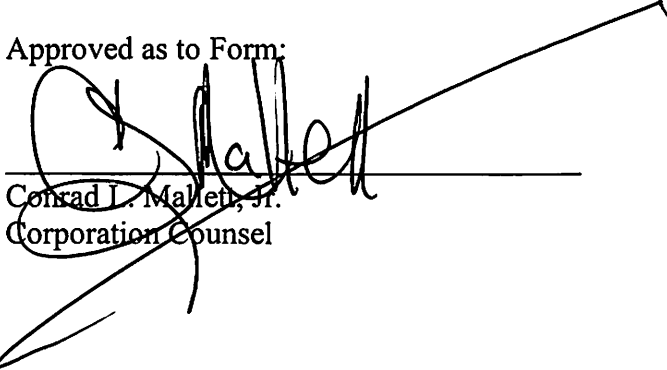
1 the existing PD Planned Development District zoning classification is revised to the R5 Medium  
2 Density Residential District zoning classification. The regulations for development associated with  
3 the existing PD Planned Development District zoning district are repealed.

4 **Section 2.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are  
5 repealed.

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

8 **Section 4.** This ordinance shall become effective on the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) day after publication  
9 in accordance with Section 401(6) of Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended, M.C.L. 125.3401(6)  
10 and Section 4-118, paragraph 3 of the 2012 Detroit City Charter.

Approved as to Form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Conrad L. Mallett, Jr.  
Corporation Counsel





**PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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**TO:** Mr. Marcell Todd, Legislative Policy Division  
**FROM:** Greg Moots, Planning and Development  
**RE:** Master Plan Interpretation for Rezoning  
**DATE:** March 2, 2022

**RE:** Master Plan of Policies review of the request to either modify the provisions on Map 78 of an existing PD (Planned Development) zoning district classification or to show an R5 (Medium Density Residential) zoning district classification where that existing PD zoning classification is currently shown for 7800 Pierson Street, generally bounded by Tireman Avenue and Braile, Sawyer, and Pierson Streets.

Dear Mr. Todd:

Pursuant to the City of Detroit's City Charter (Sections 6-202 and 6-204), the Planning and Development Department's (P&DD) Planning Division submits the following review of the proposed rezoning.

The proposed map amendment is at the request of the DTE Energy.

**Location**

The area is bounded by Tireman Avenue to the north, Braile Street to the east, Sawyer Street to the south, and Pierson Street to the west. It is immediately east of Rouge Park. It is located in the Master Plan's Rouge neighborhood.

**Existing Site Information**

The subject area is zoned PD (Planned Development). It is presently being used by the petitioner for a tree trimming academy under a temporary permit.

**Surrounding Site Information**

North: Single Family homes.  
East: Single Family homes.  
South: Single Family homes.  
West: Park.

**Project Proposal**

The request will permit the permanent development of a tree trimming academy. The facility is currently temporarily operating at the site. Development includes a parking lot, a trailer for classes, and a climbing structures area.



## **Interpretation**

### *Impact on Surrounding Land Use*

The redevelopment of the long-vacant site into a vocational school with indoor and outdoor operations should not significantly impact the surrounding recreation and residential uses. Vegetative screening is proposed around the parking lot to reduce visual impact. The applicant reports that in previous meetings, residents have not expressed a concern with noise.

### *Impact on Transportation*

There is a bus route running to the north of the site on Tireman Street. The main entrance is from the south, off Sawyer via Pierson Street. It seems advantageous for the main entrance to be switched from the south to the north to use Tireman and only a very short segment of Pierson.

## **Master Plan Interpretation**

While the site's Future General Land Use classification of "Low Density Residential" for the site envisions one and two-family homes, the fairly small scale of the proposed rezoning (under 2 acres) does not change the overall character of the area and therefore the proposed **rezoning to R5 is generally consistent** with the Master Plan classification. The modification to the existing PD does not seem possible, as Sec. 50-11-13 of the zoning ordinance requires that in PD district, "... the major land use shall correspond to the most general category of land use proposed in the Master Plan for the area involved.", which is residential in this case.

Respectfully Submitted,



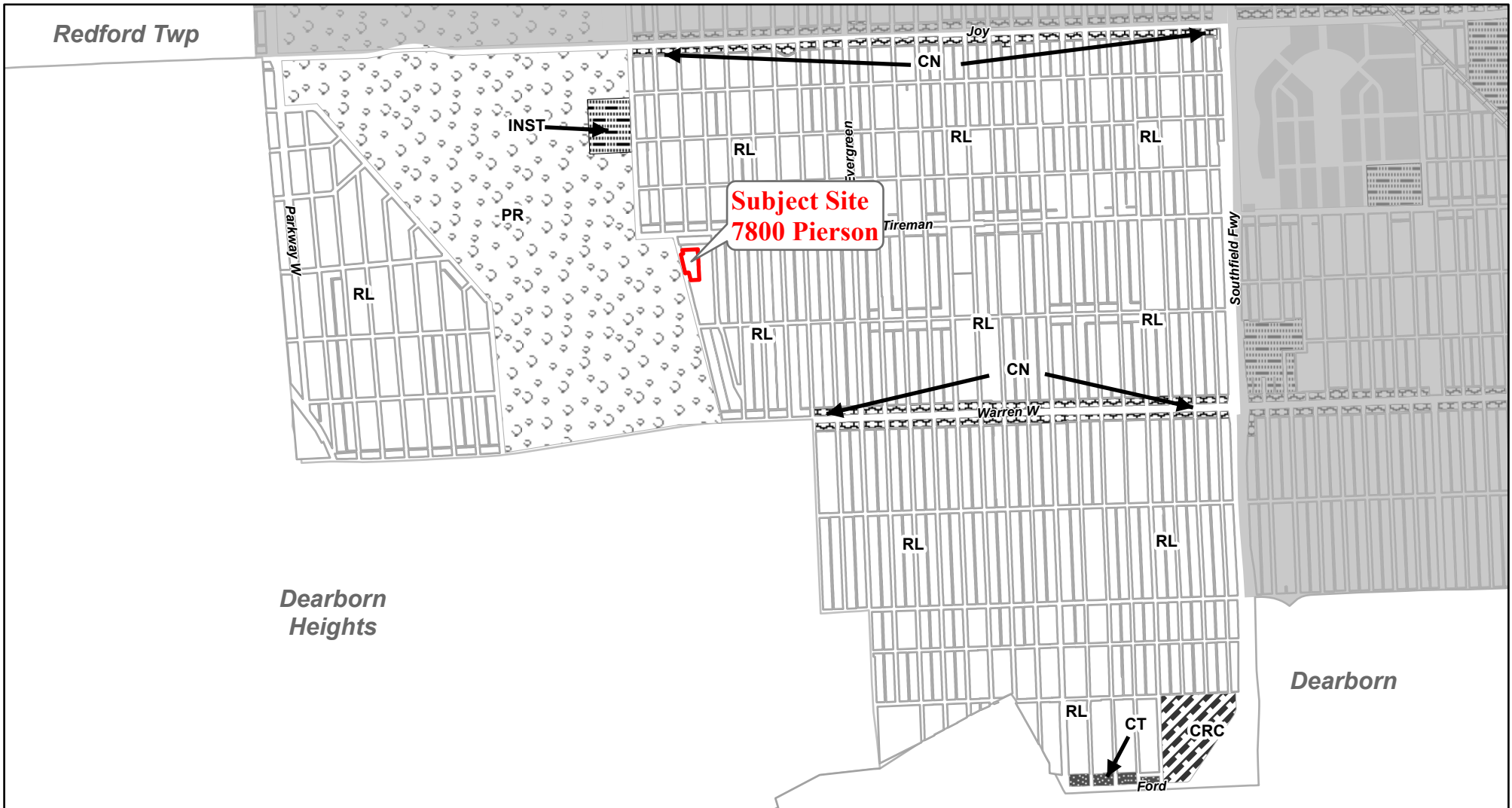
Gregory Moots

Planning and Development Department

## **Attachments**

**Future General Land Use Maps:** Map 7-4b, Neighborhood Cluster 7, Rouge

CC: Antoine Bryant, Director, Planning and Development  
Katy Trudeau, Deputy Director, Planning and Development  
Karen Gage



**Map 7-4B**

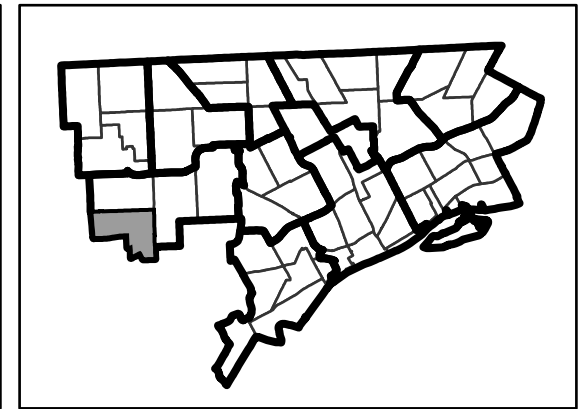
**City of Detroit  
Master Plan of  
Policies**

**Neighborhood Cluster 7  
Rouge**



**Future Land Use**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Low Density Residential (RL)           | Distribution / Port Industrial (IDP)   |
| Low / Medium Density Residential (RLM) | Mixed - Residential / Commercial (MRC) |
| Medium Density Residential (RM)        | Mixed - Residential / Industrial (MRI) |
| High Density Residential (RH)          | Mixed - Town Center (MTC)              |
| Major Commercial (CM)                  | Recreation (PRC)                       |
| Retail Center (CRC)                    | Regional Park (PR)                     |
| Neighborhood Commercial (CN)           | Private Marina (PRM)                   |
| Thoroughfare Commercial (CT)           | Airport (AP)                           |
| Special Commercial (CS)                | Cemetery (CEM)                         |
| General Industrial (IG)                | Institutional (INST)                   |
| Light Industrial (IL)                  |  |



X	77	69
X	78	40
X	X	X

