

City of Detroit

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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Lauren Hood, MCD
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Donovan Smith
Vice Chair/Secretary

Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
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Brenda Goss Andrews
Kenneth R. Daniels
Damion W. Ellis
David Esparza, AIA, LEED
Ritchie Harrison
Gwen Lewis
Frederick E. Russell, Jr.

Meeting Minutes December 2, 2021

I. Opening

- A. Call to Order - Vice-Chairperson Smith called to meeting order at 5:00 PM
- B. Roll Call - Marcell Todd, CPC Director, called the roll. A quorum was present.

Attendees: Andrews, Daniels, Esparza, Harrison, Lewis, Smith and Russell

Excused: Ellis and Hood

- C. Amendments to and approval of agenda

Commissioner Daniels motioned approval of the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion approved.

Minutes - October 7, 2021

Commissioner Daniels motioned approval of the October 7, 2021 meeting minutes; seconded by Commissioner Russell.

The Commission took a brief moment to acknowledge the retirement of Kathryn Underwood, a Senior Planner.

II. Public Hearings, Discussions and Presentations

- A. **PRESENTATION** – Introductory presentation Police Chief James White

Police Chief James White was a 24-year veteran of the Detroit Police Department when he retired in September of 2020 as an assistant chief. After retirement he became the director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, serving for one year and 10 months

before he returned to the Detroit Police Department as Interim Chief. In August of 2021 he was permanently selected as the Chief of the Detroit Police Department by Mayor Duggan. Chief White has implemented a 5 Point Policing Strategy that focuses on Police Presence; Crowd Management and Code Enforcement; Community Engagement; Traffic Enforcement; and Noise Enforcement.

Commissioner Andrews expressed concerns relative to recruitment of new police officers; questioned Chief White's strategy regarding recruitment. She wanted to know how citizens can help with recruitment. Chief White indicated that there are competing issues; after recruits are trained, they tend to seek out other employment opportunities in smaller municipalities. The department is working closely with Detroit Public School System, offering educational incentives in collaboration with Wayne County Community College.

B. PRESENTATION – Housing Practices and Initiatives by the Planning and Development Department and Housing and Revitalization Department

Antoine Bryant, Director of Planning and Development Department; Julie Schneider, Director of Housing and Revitalization Department; Jason Friedman, Director of the Public/Private Partnership Team and Tanya Harding, Public Private Partnership Team provided an overview of the City of Detroit's planning process, linking the two departments.

The core is strategic engagement with residents and stakeholders at every level, including corporate partners which leads to the Strategic Neighborhood Fund. The Planning and Development Department initially concentrated on ten neighborhoods in the SW areas of Detroit; seven active projects areas were added; focusing on streetscape development; design and implementation of parkland throughout the area; new and reinvigorated commercial corridors; single home stabilization for core tenants; and preservation and presentation of new housing throughout the city.

Community is the center of this process with a very definitive framework for stakeholders. This framework includes connecting with residents through focus groups, block clubs, neighborhood tours, intentionally going where residents live; scheduling meeting in the community, accessing residents as many ways as possible. The planning team includes the Housing and Revitalization Department, the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, the City Planning Commission, Consultants and active neighborhood organizations.

The framework planning study has a dedicated defined amount of time for listening and learning; strategizing and presenting and refining the ideas heard from the residents. After those plans are finalized and prioritized it is handed off to other teammates for implementation, usually resulting in retail, affordable housing, both through preservation and new construction. Examples sited were the current

Livernois/McNichols improvements, the Fitzgerald Greenway, Islandview and the Westend Village Stabilization Plan of single-family houses.

Additional context was provided by Julie Schneider, Director of Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD) regarding the role of HRD as partners in the Neighborhood Planning efforts and the implementation of those plans responsible for the administration of federal housing and community development dollars; formally known as the Community Block Grant Program (CDBG); and the Home Investment Partnership Program, which are the primary tools used to invest in housing development and preservation. Within the administration of those funds, HRD does a lot of work through their Public/Private Partnership Division to develop the pipeline of housing; primarily affordable housing work focusing on development of housing projects. HRD also provides solutions for the homeless, administers emergency solutions grants, the Neighborhoods Opportunity Funds (NOF), which provides funding to community organizations, key services for senior assistance, public safety, educational opportunities and the Single Family House Repair Program.

III. Unfinished Business

- A. Consideration of the text amendment that would amend Chapter 50 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, *Zoning*, to provide for the change of permissibility of several land uses (Lofts; Residential uses combined with permitted commercial uses; Group day care homes; Brewpubs; Fast-food restaurants; Used goods dealers) in certain zoning districts and to restore a site plan review applicability provision inadvertently deleted in Ordinance No. 2020-12 and to provide an off-street parking exemption for the Lower Woodward subsector of Master Plan Cluster 4, among other things.

Rory Bolger, CPC Staff, provided a status update relative to the above referenced text amendment. The City Planning Commission held a public hearing on 10/21/2021 regarding text amendment to Zoning Ordinance. The request came from the Mayor's Equity Council, the Building and Safety Engineering and Environmental Department and the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation. The key focus was to transform six land uses in certain zoning districts from conditional uses to by-right uses. There were concerns during the public hearing of the lack of broader notice to the community relative to the proposed zoning changes.

CPC staff reviewed proposal and participated in November 8, 2021 community meeting with 176 Zoom participants. On November 18, 2021, staff presented to the Commission a report that showed a portion of the proposed text amendment, the exemption of the Lower Woodward Master Plan Subsector of off-street parking requirements had been withdrawn from the original proposed amendment. Jamie Murphy, CPC staff, shared a presentation regarding liquor related uses per request from Commissioners.

Staff informed the Commission of the scheduled community engagement meeting on November 11, 2021 held at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Aviation District in which staff provided a PowerPoint Presentation regarding the ordinance. Comments and concerns were focused on limited public notification and the lack of

information regarding the provisions of the ordinance and the continued proliferation of other land use. Staff asked the attendees if they supported or disagreed with the proposed ordinance, and no one voiced support. Instead, attendees took exception to the proposed ordinance's measures to no longer provide public notice for certain land uses and requested broader public notices rather than diminished notice. An attorney in attendance framed the proposed lessening of public notification and elimination of land use hearings for certain uses in the context of nationwide voter suppression efforts.

Staff has no recommendation at this time and will obtain additional data from BSEED regarding these land use hearing. Staff will attempt to do a deeper dive and analysis relative to this proposal and present a status report during a January meeting.

V. New Business - None

VI. Committee Reports - None

VII. Staff Report

Marcell Todd, Director, City Planning Commission reminded the Commission of the proposed 2022 CPC Calendar and requested a motion of acceptance, if the Commission agreed to the schedule.

Commissioner Esparza suggested a community meeting be included in the schedule if there were no objections.

Director Todd will take the challenge of finding a way to hold meetings in the community even with the challenges proposed by the Pandemic; does not want to create a public safety issue; will be looking at possibilities and seeking opportunities to turn one or more sessions into community meetings.

Vice-Chairperson Smith requested status update on continuation of virtual meetings.

Director Todd indicated that no updates yet; hopeful answers soon.

Commissioner Andrews questioned pending vaccine mandates per the City Administration.

Director Todd indicated that Administration to provide updates soon.

Commissioner Andrews motioned to accept the 2022 City Planning Commission Calendar as presented; seconded by Commissioner Russell. Motion approved.

VIII. Member Report - None

IX. Communications - None

X. Public Comment

Robert Shobe submitted a letter on behalf of the residents of Beniteau between Charlevoix and Mack regarding environmental hazards caused by the Jefferson North Assembly Plant in the area, impacting the health of the residents.

Staff to provide Commission a status update regarding the pending investigations by the State of Michigan.

Normile Street Block Resident submitted a letter on behalf of the residents regarding the lack of transparency regarding the proposed text amendments, lack of proper notification and information regarding to proposal; imploring the Commission not to approve the request.

Esper Street Block Resident submitted a similar letter (with attached signatures) as the Normile Street Block regarding opposition to the proposed text amendments.

Commissioner Esparza requested copies of those letters.

Vice-Chairperson Smith charged staff with a status update regarding the complaints in January.

Zoom User from District 3 submitted a letter to CPC staff regarding alley encroachment, illegal dumping with attached signatures to be forwarded to the proper departments to address issues regarding fencing being removed around their properties and the opening of the alleyway for abutting tenants of an apartment building.

Vice-Chairperson directed staff to forward this information to the proper departments for address and to keep the Commission updated on the results.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned approximately at 8:21 pm