



City of Detroit
Detroit City Council
Council Member Angela Whitfield Calloway
District 2

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council, City Clerk
FROM: The Office of Council Member Angela Whitfield-Calloway *AWC*
DATE: July 15, 2024
RE: Statement for Formal Session

I look forward to the legal opinion that will be submitted by an independent legal counsel concerning solar farms. I pray that the opinion will resolve some serious issues concerning this project.

1. Whether the City of Detroit use its powers of eminent domain to take property for solar farms where the City of Detroit will retain ownership of the property but enter into a 35-year lease with private companies for the generation of electricity?
2. Whether the City of Detroit can ignore its own Detroit Zoning Code to place 200 acres of solar farms in residential neighborhoods throughout the city?

The second issue is extremely important.

The Administration failed to follow the normal process by skipping the City Planning Commission approval process. It is my opinion that the Administration intentionally avoided the City Planning Commission because they feared the push back on their plans to install 200 acres of industrial solar farms in residential neighborhoods. The Administration does not have the votes necessary, before the City Planning Commission, for approval of this plan that goes against the basic ideas of urban planning and zoning - industrial uses should be in industrial areas and residential uses should be in residential neighborhoods.

The Law Department now advocates for an immediate vote to approve the Phase One Solar Farm package with the hope that the City Planning Commission will retroactively approve the plan at a later date. The Law Department is putting the cart before the horse.



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If City Council follows this advice only to find that the City Planning Commission denies the Phase One Solar Farm package, then the City of Detroit will find itself in the dangerous legal position.

I will not gamble with the taxpayer's money in this way. I will vote NO for several reasons but the most elementary reason is the Administration's failure to follow the Detroit Zoning Code and failure to obtain City Planning Commission approval before bringing this package to City Council. I urge my colleagues to also vote NO.