

# City of Detroit

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**TO:** City Planning Commission

**FROM:** Kimani Jeffrey, City Planner

**RE:** Request of co-petitioners Leandra King and Herman Stacy in conjunction with the City Planning Commission to amend Article XVII, Section 50-17-10, District Map No. 9 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, to show an SD1 (Special Development, Small-scale, Mixed-use) zoning classification where the R2 (Two-Family Residential District), R5 (Medium Density Residential District) and R6 (High Density Residential District) zoning classifications are shown for properties commonly known as 11534 Woodrow Wilson Avenue, also 1534, 1540, 1550, 1636 Lawrence Street, and 1551, 1537 Burlingame Street, generally bounded by Rosa Parks Boulevard, the east/west alley first north of Lawrence Street, Woodrow Wilson Avenue, Burlingame Street, the John C. Lodge Freeway, and Lawrence Street (see map below).

The proposed map amendment is being requested at 1636 Lawrence Street to permit retail services to support farm and cider operation. The petitioner at 1551 Burlingame is petitioning for a separate amendment in order to permit a childcare center and school, a retail bookstore, a coffee shop, an office for counseling services, as well as a gallery and rental hall. The remaining parcels are the initiative of CPC staff to maintain zoning consistency if the petition were to be adopted.

**DATE:** March 18, 2025

## PROPOSAL

Before the City Planning Commission is the co-petition of Leandra King and Herman Stacy in conjunction with the City Planning Commission to show an SD1 (Special Development, Small-scale, Mixed-use) zoning classification where the R2 (Two-Family Residential District), R5 (Medium Density Residential District) and R6 (High Density Residential District) zoning classifications are shown for properties commonly known as 11534 Woodrow Wilson Avenue, also 1534, 1540, 1550, 1636 Lawrence Street, and 1551, 1537 Burlingame Street (see map below).

Located at 1636 Lawrence, Detroit Farm and Cider (DFC) is an initiative aimed at fostering educational experiences for youth in Detroit. The site seeks to serve as a hub for youth equestrian workshops and host certain farm animals such as chickens, for programming with local school district students. The proposed map amendment is being requested to permit retail sales for a farm and cider operation that will conduct cider pressing and farm to table dinners. The program

is also planned to be supported by residential unit(s), and a bed and breakfast. The animal keeping components of this proposal will have to proceed through a Special Land Use hearing at the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED). The rezoning is requested to specifically allow for the commercial and retail sales components of the project.

Jehovah Shalom Church of God Inc. (JSCGI) is the co-petitioner at 1551 Burlingame. The church is petitioning for a separate amendment in order to permit a childcare center and school, a retail bookstore, coffee shop, an office for counseling services, as well as a gallery and rental hall.

CPC staff have been included as a co-petitioner for all parcels shown in the map that are not under the ownership of the primary petitioners. This is being done in order to retain zoning consistency between the two projects.



## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### *Master Plan Consistency*

The subject rezoning site is located within the Durfee area of Neighborhood Cluster 6 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies (MP). The Future Land Use map for this area shows Low/Medium Density Residential (RLM) and Neighborhood Commercial (CN).

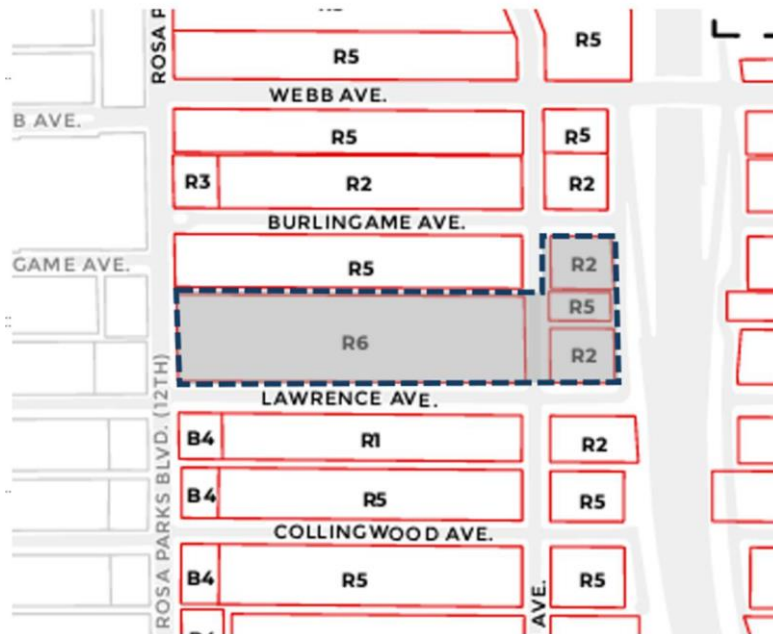
The Planning and Development Department (P&DD) provided a letter confirming that **the proposed rezoning is generally consistent** with the Master Plan because it is under approximately five acres and doesn't impact the surrounding character of the neighborhood in a significant way.

### *Parking*

During the public hearing, there were Commissioners that asked questions about where parking will be located. Generally, parking considerations are taken up once a proposal is submitted to BSEED. Once BSEED determines the specific uses that are being proposed they assess what the parking requirement is for the site and the applicant must submit plans that indicate the required

parking spaces. An applicant for permit may also seek a variance to reduce the required parking count, if necessary, by petitioning the Board of Zoning Appeals.

As it relates to the two sites, it should be noted that there is an ample amount of on-street parking surrounding both the 1551 Burlingame and the 1636 Lawrence Street sites. There are also additional opportunities for the creation of parking at the vacant lots adjacent to JSCGI that are owned by the Land Bank and may be potentially purchased and used for supportive parking. The DFC site is approximately four acres and if necessary, would be large enough to support the creation of on-site parking facilities as necessary. The City offers early analysis through the [Pre Plan Review](#) and site plan review processes to provide feedback on these matters once the petitioners are ready.



**Proposed parcels to be rezoned are within the boundary on the map**

### **PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS**

During the public hearing, one person spoke at the hearing in support of Detroit Farm and Cider. A petition in support of this project from surrounding residents was submitted as well as a letter of support by Cass Community Social Services.

Commissioners raised a number of questions during the hearing. CPC staff answered most of those questions, however a remaining question that was raised, was related to the distance from the subject site to the Joe Louis Greenway (JLG). Staff has determined that this proposed rezoning site is approximately 1.34 miles away from the nearest stretch of the JLG to the north. The reason that the Commission raised this question was to inquire about what synergy there might be between the subject proposal and other planning efforts. Commissioner Russell also requested that staff coordinate with the Planning and Development Department to request that this area be looked at for future planning efforts. CPC staff will be having discussion with PDD to share this sentiment regarding planning for the area.



### ***Civil Legal Case***

At the public hearing, staff raised the fact that Detroit Farm and Cider was taken to court by the City’s Law Department for originally operating without permit. Correction orders were filed in court pertaining to pulling the necessary permits for work that has been completed (see attachments). The Law Dept. staff also spoke at the meeting confirming the corrective orders had been issued.

Since the hearing, CPC staff has followed up with the attorney handling this case to ascertain whether there is any reason that the rezoning should not move forward. Law staff relayed to CPC staff that they have no issue with this rezoning proposal moving forward at this time. Benchmarks are currently being met and the corrective work plan is achievable, although not yet completed. This rezoning will also be a step in the direction of legalizing elements of the petitioner’s proposal and coming into conformance with city code.

### **APPROVAL CRITERIA**

Recommendations and decisions on a zoning map amendment shall be based on consideration of the below criteria. Staff comments are provided following each criteria:

- 1) Whether the proposed amendment corrects an error or meets the challenge of some changing condition, trend, or fact.*

The proposed amendment is meeting the changing conditions of how land is used in this area. Many of the parcels in question have gone underutilized. These proposals aim to bring some vitality to the neighborhood. The show of support from surrounding residents indicates that this community is supportive of the land being used more productively.

- 2) *Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Master Plan and the stated purposes of the zoning code.*

According to PDD's letter, the proposed amendment is generally consistent with the MP.

- 3) *Whether the proposed amendment will protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.*

The SD1 Special Development District is designed to encourage a complementary mixture of small-scale pedestrian and transit-oriented uses that are compatible in a neighborhood setting. It is intended to ensure a neighborhood character and place a proper balance of activities within walking distance of one another while serving the day-to-day needs of residents.

The proposed zoning district would allow the proposed uses that the farm and church plan to host. The new zoning district is being requested to facilitate commercial activity. These uses are permissible in the SD1 small-scale mixed-use district as it permits for more commercial and mixed-use activity, while they would not be permitted in the existing residential districts. Given the fact that the farm has hosted some of the proposed activities before shows that it can be done without disturbing the community. Now that DFC is coming through the proper channels for review and permitting, the City can help to make the project function legally which should enhance the safety and general welfare for the public. As it relates to the church site, the proposed commercial activities will be contained within the existing structure and should not cause any detriment to the public either.

- 4) *Whether the city and other service providers will be able to provide adequate public facilities and services to the subject property, while maintaining adequate levels of service to existing development.*

The proposed activities will not have a negative impact on public facilities.

- 5) *Whether the proposed rezoning will have significant adverse impacts on the natural environment, including air, water, soil, wildlife, and vegetation and with respect to anticipated changes in noise and regarding stormwater management.*

The rezoning is not expected to have significant adverse impacts on the natural environment.

- 6) *Whether the proposed amendment will have significant adverse impacts on other property that is in the vicinity of the subject tract.*

Staff does not expect that there will be any significant adverse impacts on other properties within proximity of the parcels to be rezoned. There seems to also be community support to indicate this as well.

- 7) *The suitability of the subject property for the existing zoning classification and proposed zoning classification.*

The current residential zoning districts that are in place do not allow for all of the activities that are proposed for the two petitioners. The SD1 zoning district will allow for more commercial activities and align with the petitioners' requests. While the SD1 district was not necessarily meant to allow for productive agricultural projects, the SD1 district allows uses of a low/medium intensity, it permits commercial uses, and allows for urban farms of

a certain scale. In the future, staff seeks to design better ways to address these types of creative projects as there is increased interest for them.

8) *Whether the proposed rezoning will create and illegal "spot zone."*

The proposed rezoning will **not** create an illegal spot zone. By the two petitioner's properties being rezoned and the CPC staff co-petitioning for the rezoning of additional Land Bank owned parcels, this alleviates the potential of a spot zone. Additionally, PDD has deemed this generally consistent with the MP.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the community support, the above analysis, and the goals of the two petitioners, staff **recommends approval** of this request. This petition has the possibility to bring new life to this area. It also has the potential to be an asset for nearby residents as the two sites would offer services and amenities that may appeal to community members.

Attachment: Correction orders  
Support materials

cc: Alexa Bush, Director, PDD  
Greg Moots, PDD  
David Bell, Director, BSEED  
Conrad Mallett, Corporation Counsel  
Daniel Arking, Law