



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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Detroit City Planning Commission
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RE: Public Center Adjacent (PC) Review of exterior changes at 1 Hart Plaza.
(RECOMMEND APPROVAL)

The following is the Planning and Development Department's (PDD) review of the proposed maintenance of the Hart Plaza Grand Stairway which extends from the north edge of the Atwater Tunnel, south to the Detroit Riverwalk. The eastern boundary is the Detroit Police Department offices and the western boundary is the Detroit Riverwalk and the approach from the Detroit River Princess to the upper plaza.

The proposed improvements include the repair, cleaning and grading of a uniform finished paved surface across the entire plaza. The proposed improvements will address inaccessible slopes, replace guard rails, provide seat walls and provide site furnishings, upgrade lighting, increase green space and improve landscaping.

This is adjacent to currently vacant land zoned PD, located at 50 E. Jefferson Ave. This review is carried out per Sec. 50-11-66 for the review of developments located in the Public Center District (PC) zoning district.

Following is our response to the applicable criteria from Sec. 50-11-67, with our response in italics.

(1) The proposed development should reflect applicable policies stated in the Master Plan; *Increasing open space and recreational opportunities is Goal 8 of the Central Business District subsector. Policy 8.2 states that the condition of public areas should be improved to encourage river-related recreation activities including fishing and picnicking. Proposed landscaping and drainage improvements and additional seating can accommodate this goal by creating spaces where active and passive recreation can occur.*

(3) The proposed development should be compatible with surrounding development in terms of land use, general appearance and function and should not adversely affect the value of adjacent properties; *The proposed improvements and the maintenance of the Hart Plaza Grand Stairway should improve the appearance of the site and alleviate existing grading and accessibility deficiencies while improving the condition of furnishings, landscaping, drainage and lighting. This should be of benefit to visitors to the site and to the value of surrounding land uses.*

(8) Public access should be provided where appropriate, including provision of adequate right-of-way for the continuous pedestrian/bicycle pathway being developed along the Detroit River; *The*

proposed maintenance of the Hart Plaza Grand Stairway will increase accessibility by the public to the Detroit Riverwalk which currently supports pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

(15) Urban design elements of form and character should be carefully considered; such elements include, but are not limited to: richness/interest of public areas through the provision of storefronts, window displays, landscaping, and artwork; color, texture and quality of structural materials; enclosure of public spaces; variations in scale; squares, plazas and/or "vest pocket parks" where appropriate; continuity of experience, visual activity and interest; articulation and highlighting of important visual features; preservation/enhancement of important views and vistas; *Public areas will be enhanced by the use of salvaged granite for benches, pavers, bench walls and stairs, maintaining the character of the use of these materials throughout the existing site.*

(16) Special attention should be given to amenity and comfort considerations such as provision for outdoor seating, restrooms for public use, bicycle storage, convenience of access points and protection from harsh weather through such features as enclosed walkways and arcaded pedestrian areas; *Benches will be added to provide the opportunity to Hart Plaza visitors to appreciate the changes in grade from the river to the street level at Jefferson. Also, the additional seating will allow visitors to rest and contemplate the memorials and sculptures located around the Grand Staircase.*

Because of the conformance to the above standards for development in the PC district, the PDD is pleased to support the proposed changes to the Hart Plaza Grand Stairway.

Respectfully submitted,



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Office of Zoning Innovation

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