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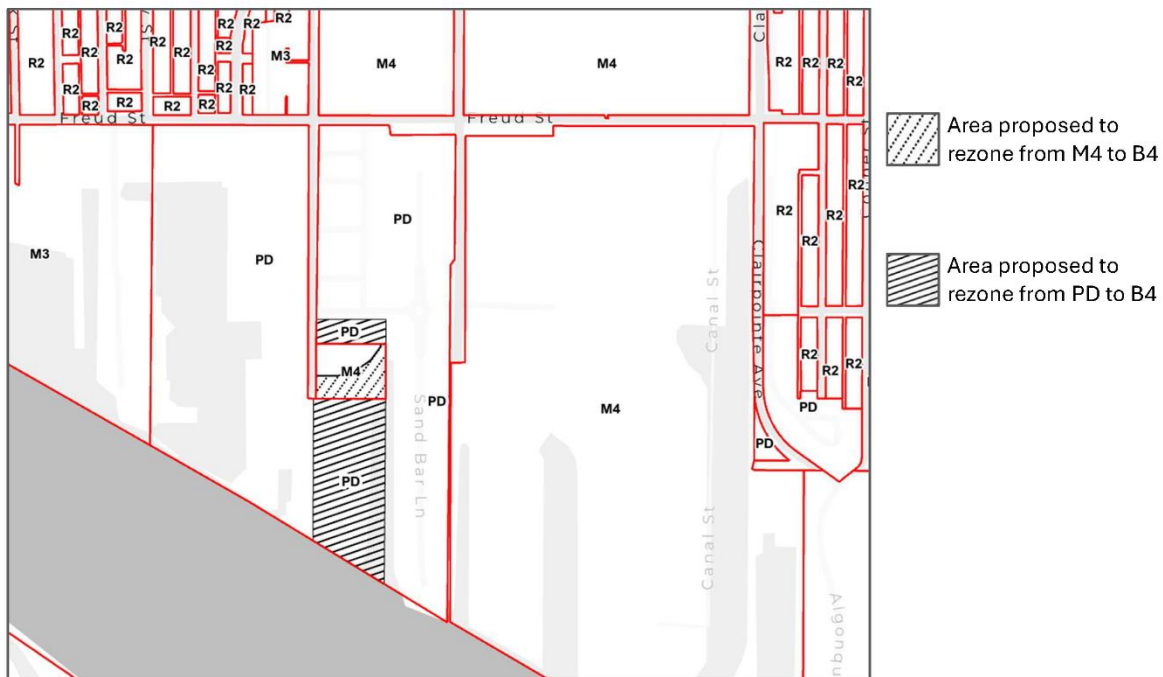
October 10, 2025

**TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RE: The request of Matthew Walters on behalf of Goat Yard Marine, LLC (doing business as Detroit Boatworks) to rezone the properties at 2 St. Jean, 21 St. Jean, 95 St. Jean Street, and 140 Terminal Street, from PD (Planned Development) and M4 (Intensive Industrial) zoning classifications to a B4 (General Business) zoning classification. (RECOMMEND APPROVAL)**

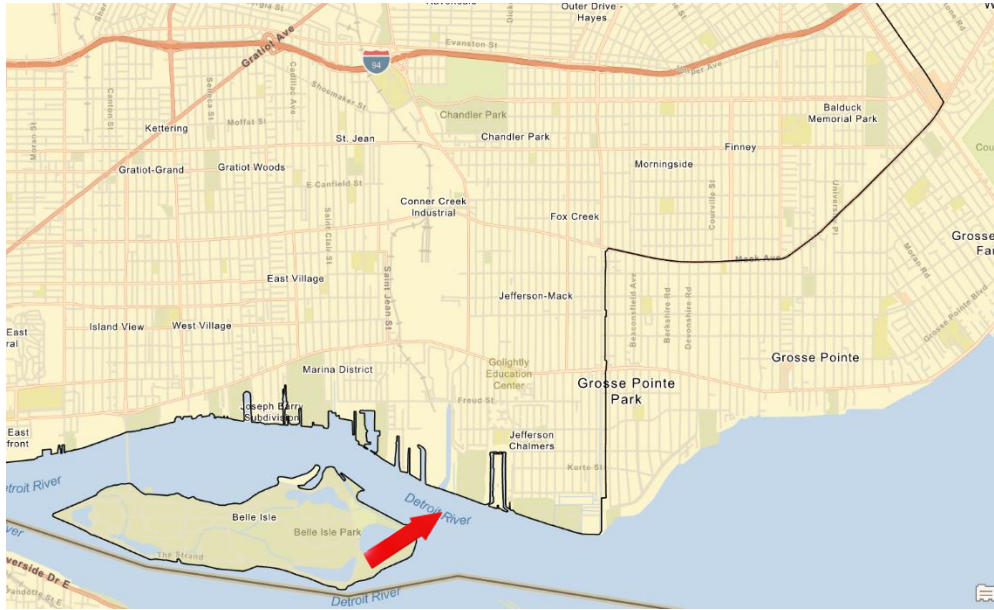
**REQUEST**

The City Planning Commission (CPC) has received and processed the request of Matthew Walters on behalf of Goat Yard Marine, LLC (doing business as Detroit Boat Works) to rezone the land at 2 St. Jean, 21 St. Jean and 140 Terminal from, and the land at 95 St. Jean from M4 (Intensive Industrial) and PD (Planned Development) to B4 (General Business) to permit a marina expansion.



## BACKGROUND

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On September 4, 2025, the City Planning Commission (CPC) held a public hearing on the request of Matthew Walters to amend Chapter 50, Article XVII, Section 50-17-32, District Map No. 30 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, to show a B4 zoning classification where a PD and M4 zoning classification is currently shown at 2, 21, 95 St. Jean Street, and 140 Terminal Street. The location is indicated on the map above by the red arrow.

The proposed map amendment is requested in order to permit a marina expansion, including boat storage, inside storage, new boat slips, restaurant and retail. The proposal would amend/remove a portion of the original PD created by Ordinance No. 23-05 in 2005.

The subject parcels include the following:

- 21 St. Jean – owned by the petitioner; formerly developed as Precision Marine; it is zoned M4.
- 95 St. Jean – owned by the petitioner; the petitioner purchased in 2018 and has since cleaned up the property and uses for boat storage; it is zoned M4.
- 140 Terminal; a small sliver of land owned by the City; the petitioner is negotiating to purchase this parcel; it is zoned PD.
- 2 St. Jean – owned by the City; the land is vacant except for western edge used for parking for adjacent public boat launch across the street at 150 St. Jean; this land is zoned PD. The petitioner is negotiating to purchase this land.

The subject site is in District 4 in the Marina District. The site is generally bounded by Nautical Way to the north, Sand Bar Lane and a canal of the Detroit River to the east, the Detroit River to the south, and St. Jean Street to the west. The subject parcels are indicated on the map below.



The proposed rezoning would remove/rezone the portion of the existing PD that was not developed as planned, but keep the portion of the PD associated with phases 1 and 2, commonly known as the Morgan Waterfront Estates. 45 St. Jean is located in the middle of the subject rezoning and developed with Hackett Brass Foundry. The City Planning Commission understands that Hackett Brass is presently selling this building and does not want to lose the current M4 zoning classification.

The petitioner currently operates boat storage at 21 and 95 St. Jean. The petitioner is proposing to expand the existing business and is negotiating with the City to purchase 140 Terminal and 2 St. Jean. The petitioner is proposing to provide more access to the waterfront and support the demand of the boating community. Their goal is to retain some of the marine industry that is leaving the City of Detroit due to a lack in marine services. The current owners seek to take a city property which has sat vacant for some years (2 St. Jean) and expand their marine services. The development would include the following:

- A new marina along the canal with new boat slips
- Outside boat storage
- A new warehouse with indoor boat storage, as well as accessory retail and maintenance

- Restaurant at the south end of the site
- Maintenance of the existing public parking on the west edge of the site utilized for the adjacent public boat launch

## **PUBLIC HEARING AND FOLLOW-UP**

On September 4, 2025, the CPC held the statutory public hearing regarding the proposed rezoning of 2, 21, 95 St. Jean Street and 140 Terminal Way from PD and M4 to B4.

Prior to the public hearing, the CPC received one letter of support for the proposed rezoning from the president of the Morgan Waterfront Estates Homeowner’s Association. The letter indicated that the Homeowner Association board was in support of the project and rezoning.

At the public hearing four members of the public spoke, each expressing concerns around the proposed project. These concerns included the increase in traffic coming in and out of the canal, increased vehicular traffic, possible noise during summer months, and the impact that losing the view of downtown could have on property values.

During the public hearing, the commission discussed the following:

- Commissioners encouraged the petitioner to engage further with the community, specifically the residents of the Morgan Waterfront Estates.
- Will the rezoning create an illegal spot zoning, specifically the parcel located at 45 St. Jean Street.
- Will the proposed rezoning impact the St. Jean public boat launch? Are there improvements planned for the existing boat launch?
- Will there be programming geared toward educating youth on sailing as a part of the proposed development.

### **Public Hearing Follow-Up**

Following the public hearing the petitioner participated in further engagement with the residents that expressed concerns during the hearing. The petitioner successfully addressed the residents concerns, and subsequently received a letter of support from two of the residents. Additionally, the CPC received one letter of opposition following the public hearing.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ANALYSIS**

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

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

North:	PD – Developed with residential
East:	PD – Developed with residential
South:	Detroit River
West:	PD – vacant owned by the City of Detroit Parks and Recreation

## CURRENT ZONING MAP



The area surrounding the subject site hosts a variety of uses which include residential, industrial, commercial and recreational. M3 (General Industrial) and M4 zoned parcels can be seen immediately adjacent to the subject site as well as further to the east and west. In addition to a marina, a variety of uses can be found on the industrially zoned parcels, including but not limited to boat sales, cycle boat tours, and a park. Further west shows W1 (Waterfront-Industrial) and B4 zoning classifications where the historic Waterworks Park is located, as well as a restaurant and event center. To the east and south of the site is also PR (Parks and Recreation) zoning, which include both Belle Isle and Maheras-Gentry Park. Further to the east and northwest of the subject site shows residential zoning ranging from single-family to medium density.

### Rezoning Criteria

Section 50-3-70 of the Zoning Ordinance provides eight criteria that must be considered when making recommendations and decisions regarding zoning map amendments. The following analysis is based on those criteria. The applicable criteria are shown in italics.

#### **Correction of Error or Changing Conditions**

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

The proposed rezoning would remove an existing PD designation that has not, and likely will not, come to fruition. The existing PD would only allow for two 18-story condo buildings to be developed on the site, but this project was never developed.

**Master Plan Consistency**

*Criterion #2: Whether the proposed amendment consistent with he Master Plan and the stated purposes of this chapter.*

The Planning and Development Department (P&DD) staff has informed the CPC that the proposed rezoning is **not consistent** with the current FLU designation for the subject site. To address this inconsistency, P&DD staff will consider amending the FLU Map as a part of the Master Plan update.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



**Impact on the Natural Environment**

*Criterion #2: 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 CPC anticipates no adverse impact on the natural environment. The clearing of the adjacent canal and remediation of the once industrial land will have positive implications for the surrounding environment. Currently, the canal has multiple sunken boats that need cleared, which will improve the quality of the water in the area.

**Impact on Surrounding Property**

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

The CPC does not anticipate any significant adverse impacts on other properties in the vicinity of the subject tract.

**Suitable Zoning**

*Criterion #7: The suitability of the subject property for the existing zoning classification and proposed zoning classification*

As the property has not been developed as indicated in the existing PD for the site, the proposed zoning would be more suitable for the subject property, as it would allow for a variety of uses and development types, where it is currently quite restricted.

**Possibility of Illegal Spot Zoning**

*Criterion #8. Whether the proposed rezoning will create an illegal “spot zone”*

Some of the criteria to determine a spot zoning include the following:

- The rezoned area is small in comparison to the surrounding districts.
- The new use is inconsistent with surrounding land uses.
- The change confers a special benefit on a single owner that is not enjoyed by others.
- The change conflicts with the community's master plan.

The CPC thinks the majority of these criteria are not triggered and thus the rezoning does not create an illegal spot zone.

**CONCLUSION**

On October 9, 2025 the CPC unanimously voted to **RECOMMEND APPROVAL** of the request of based on the public hearing results, contents of this report, and the approval criteria for map amendments.

Attachments:

Letters from neighboring residents and property owners  
Public hearing notice  
Site plan  
Topographic surveys  
Application for zoning change

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