



234 Winder Street • Detroit, MI 48201 • [www.BrushParkCDC.org](http://www.BrushParkCDC.org) • [BrushParkCDC@Gmail.com](mailto:BrushParkCDC@Gmail.com)

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May 15, 2019

Joel Smith  
NEUMANN/SMITH ARCHITECTURE  
[JSmith@neumannsmith.com](mailto:JSmith@neumannsmith.com)

**Re: SOMA Parking Deck Development**

The Brush Park Community Development Corporation (the "CDC") forwards this letter to provide feedback on the proposed SOMA Parking Deck to be constructed on Erskine between John R. and Woodward (the "Project").

The updated Project plan was presented before the CDC and the Brush Park community at a public meeting held on April 29, 2019. While there was an acknowledgment of the need for parking, generally, community feedback was negative and residents voiced concerns about how the parking deck could negatively impact safety and traffic flow on and around Erskine, particular when used for game day and event parking. There were also concern about the limited mixed used value of the project, as the community generally does not support stand-alone parking structures.

After careful consideration, by a vote of 5 in favor and 3 objections, the CDC board voted to support the Project. Attachment A contains the opinions offered by the Board during the voting process for your consideration; please note, the opinions should not be used to dispute the Board's vote and are included for reference only. We do however that the developer consider these opinions for any additional changes to the project.

We thank you again for your commitment to Brush Park and making a positive impact in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "KH", is written over a blue horizontal line.

Karissa Holmes, Secretary

Cc: City of Detroit Planning & Development

## Attachment A: Poll Comments for SOMA Parking Deck

Below are the opinions submitted by CDC Board Members during the voting process for reference and consideration. Please note, the opinions should not be used to dispute the Board's final vote and are included for reference only.

### Comment 1:

The City's recent presentation did not change my mind on this development since there were no changes to the proposal. I strongly do not support a stand alone parking structure in the neighborhood, and the intent of the original plan presented years ago has significantly changed. There is no reason why this building cannot be and should not be truly mixed use, where parking is an ancillary use rather than the primary use as it is in this case. Not only would it set a dangerous precedent in the neighborhood, but specific to this parcel, it would not maximize or even come close to reaching the potential of this site. It would also negatively impact residents in this immediate area and diminish the urban fabric of this block. The structure should not be approved without residential, office, and/or a similarly active use as the primary use, with enough parking only to support those primary uses and the adjacent hotel. There are many other design solutions for this site that do not include 500+ public parking spaces; the CDC would be happy to discuss some of those with the developer if they are having design challenges and/or having trouble understanding the Brush Park community's goals. It is general consensus among the community that standalone parking structures should not be allowed anywhere. It was concerning that the development team had not considered, or even heard of, a "shared parking" scenario, where the parking spaces could be used by office users during the day and residents and retail users in the evening, thereby significantly reducing the number of total spaces. Instead, the current parking strategy is extremely conventional in nature. Furthermore, the fact that there are currently 400 spaces in the vastly disorganized surface parking lot arrangement of today does not mean 400 spaces need to be replaced for the office buildings. I believe the development team said the buildings together are 150,000 SF. For that amount of office space, the number of parking spaces should be between 225 (@ 1.5 per 1000 sf as specified by the Draft Form-Based Code, 11/08/18) and 375 spaces (@ 1 per 400 sf as specified by the Detroit Zoning Ordinance). I think it's really great the developer has a tenant lined up, but I am disappointed that this tenant, especially a public entity, is asking for an abundance of parking in a downtown-adjacent neighborhood that is trying to rebuild in a progressive, urban, walkable way. This development does not better the neighborhood; it only perpetuates and puts a permanent footprint on the parking and visitor traffic challenges we have today being adjacent to major entertainment venues. This development will be a disappointment to the neighborhood when built, a missed opportunity for something better, and a step backwards for development in Brush Park.

### Comment 2:

The only reason why I would support the parking structure is because it is needed for the West Elm hotel project, however, I believe the developers have done a poor job of creating a project that is both beneficial to their financial interest and responsive to the needs of the community.

The updated proposal presented no changes at all to the project and it still remains a stand alone parking structure with little other benefit to the fabric our neighborhood. I believe this will set a bad precedent for the neighborhood and many residents have voiced valid concerns about the intended use (paid parking for events in the evening) and how it will have a negative effect on the immediate surrounding areas and the neighborhood at large. It is clear that the developer is not concerned with working with residents on a win-win project.