

**STAFF REPORT: SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: J. ROSS**

**ADDRESS: 411 PIQUETTE**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: ADJACENT TO FORD PIQUETTE AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

**OWNER: 411 PIQUETTE LLC/THE PLATFORM**

**SPONSORING CITY AGENCY/AUTHORITY: DETROIT ECONOMIC GROWTH CORPORATION (DEGC)**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 8/22/2022**

**SCOPE OF WORK: REHABILITE BUILDING (ADVISORY OPINION PER SECTION 21-2-5)**

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The current project area/parcel includes a vacant four-story building, a paved parking lot, elevated train tracks, and an open storage structure/platform. The east elevation of the four-story building is directly adjacent to the west elevation of the Ford Piquette Avenue building/local historic district. The roof of the open storage structure butts up against the Ford Piquette Avenue building's rear, concrete block loading dock addition.



## **PROPOSAL**

Per the submitted documentation, the development team/owner is seeking to undertake the following at 411 Piquette:

*The project involves the renovation the 411 Piquette Building and Site in the City of Detroit. Proposed use is to include residential/multifamily/loft. The parking lot, loading and building access will be improved to support the renovated first floor and project needs. Likewise, new utility leads and services will be provided including domestic water, fire suppression service, storm and sanitary leads, DTE gas and DTE Electric. Scope will be included to facilitate the planning for new electrical service and easements for DTE equipment. The site is currently zoned M4 and based on the proposed program a conditional use approval from BSEED is required.*

*SITE DESIGN: The existing 411 Piquette building will be developed to accommodate both residential and commercial spaces. The existing parking lot will be redone to accommodate 199 parking spaces, a new loading zone, dog run, and electrical services. The structure adjacent to the elevated railway will be partially demolished to accommodate the new parking layout and improve the pavement conditions. The*

*concrete platform adjacent to the current loading dock in the rear of the building will also be removed to accommodate the new layout.*

## **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- As previously noted, the current proposal is not an application for work at the Ford Piquette Avenue Historic District. Rather, the submission outlines a proposal for work at the parcel which is directly adjacent to the building/historic district. The development team is seeking an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act tax incentive as well as Brownfield Tax Increment Financing to support the rehabilitation of the property. The sponsoring city authority, the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, is therefore seeking the Commission's comment re: if the project might have a beneficial or adverse effect on the adjacent Ford Piquette Avenue Historic District.
- The project proposes a straightforward building rehabilitation of 411 Piquette, sitework/the rehabilitation of the parking lot, and the demolition of the open storage structure/platform that butts up against the Ford Piquette Avenue building's rear, concrete block loading dock addition. Although the platform butts up against the Ford Piquette Avenue building's concrete block addition, it is not likely that the demolition of the platform will damage the historic district because it is an open structure that is merely composed of a concrete slab on columns. When planning for the demolition of the platform, the development should take care to ensure that the work will not damage the adjacent Ford Piquette Avenue Historic District

## **ISSUES/COMMISSION ACTION**

The Commission is asked to provide comment under Section 21-2-5 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, as outlined below. Section 21-2-5, Effects of projects on districts The Commission is requested to make a finding concerning the "demonstrable effects of the proposed project and report same to the Mayor and City Council." The intent of this section is to provide guidance to city government prior to committing to a particular course of action, under the following requirement: A City-financed, licensed, permitted, authorized or contracted physical development project shall be considered to have a demonstrable effect on a designated or proposed historic district when any condition of the project creates a change, beneficial or adverse, in the quality of the historical, architectural, archeological, engineering, social or cultural significance that qualified the property for designation as an historic district or that may qualify the property for designation as an historic district. Generally, adverse effects occur under conditions which include:

- (1) Destruction or alteration of all or part of a resource;
- (2) Isolation from or alteration of the surrounding environment of a resource;
- (3) Introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the resource and its setting;
- (4) Transfer or sale of a City-owned resource without adequate conditions or restrictions regarding preservation, maintenance, or use; and
- (5) Neglect of a resource resulting in its deterioration or destruction

Per the above, adverse conditions to historic properties could occur if the applicant does not seek to ensure that the demolition of the platform at 411 Piquette will not damage the adjacent Ford Piquette Avenue Historic District. All other proposed work items do not have the potential to adversely impact the adjacent historic district in staff opinion.