



**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER**

June 13, 2024

Case Number: 2024-ZON-056
Property Address: 4545 East Michigan Street (Approximate Address)
Location: Center Township, Council District #13
Petitioner: SJM Co. Inc., by Jamilah Mintze
Current Zoning: D-5
Request: Rezoning of 0.12-acre from the D-5 district to the C-5 district to provide for general commercial uses, including an automobile repair shop.
Current Land Use: Vacant Commercial Building
Staff Recommendations: Denial
Staff Reviewer: Marleny Iraheta, Senior Planner

PETITION HISTORY

This is the first public hearing for this petition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff **recommends denial** of the request.

PETITION OVERVIEW

The 0.12-acre subject site is developed with a vacant commercial building and associated parking area. It is enclosed by a six-foot tall chain link fence along the perimeter.

The site is surrounded by single-family dwellings to the south, east, and north, zoned D-5, and an undeveloped lot west of the site, zoned D-5.

REZONING

The request would rezone the sites from the D-5 district to the C-5 district for general commercial uses, including an automobile repair shop which is not permitted in the current zoning district.

The D-5 district is intended for medium and large-lot housing formats, primarily for detached houses, but may incorporate small-scale multi-unit building types in strategic locations. This district can be used for new, walkable suburban neighborhoods or for infill situation in established urban areas, including both low density and medium density residential recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the Suburban Neighborhood and Traditional Neighborhood Typologies of the Land Use Pattern Book.



The C-5 District is designed to provide areas for those retail sales and service functions whose operations are typically characterized by automobiles, outdoor display, or sales of merchandise; by major repair of motor vehicles; by outdoor commercial amusement and recreational activities; or by activities or operations conducted in buildings or structures not completely enclosed. The types of uses found in this district tend to be outdoor functions, brightly lit, noisy, etc. Therefore, to provide a location where such uses can operate in harmony with the vicinity, the C-5 district should be located on select heavy commercial thoroughfares and should avoid locating adjacent to protected districts.

Staff Analysis

If granted, the C-5 rezoning would allow for the operation of an auto mechanic shop with associated parking lot to store repaired vehicles.

Automobile, motorcycle, and light vehicle service or repair is permitted in the C-4, C-5, C-7, I-3, I-4, and CBD-2 districts. These districts are not compatible with the traditional neighborhood recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan, which specifically excludes auto repair as a recommended use.

Staff determined that the proposed C-5 district would be too intense for the site since it faces three residential dwellings. The outdoor storage of vehicles is concerning due to the negative aesthetic this would promote and the potential need for additional lighting on site for said vehicle storage could negatively impact the quality of life of the surrounding residents.

Instead, the site would be more conducive for less intense uses such as offices considering that a commercial building exists on site.

Staff notified the petitioner that the existing chain link fence would need to be removed since the existing D-5 district limits fences in the front yard to 3.5 feet or 4 feet depending on opacity and the proposed C-5 district would limit fences in the front yard to five feet. Additionally, six-foot tall fences are not permitted in the clear sight triangles of the alley or streets and would need to be removed.

For these reasons, staff is recommending denial of the request.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	D-5	
Existing Land Use	Vacant Commercial Building	
Comprehensive Plan	Traditional Neighborhood	
Surrounding Context	Zoning	Land Use
	North:	D-5 Residential (Single-family dwelling)
	South:	D-5 Residential (Single-family dwelling)
	East:	D-5 Residential (Single-family dwelling)
	West:	D-5 Undeveloped
Thoroughfare Plan		
Michigan Street	Primary Arterial Street	60-foot existing right-of-way and 78-foot proposed right-of-way.

Drexel Avenue	Local Street	49-foot existing right-of-way and 48-foot proposed right-of-way.
Context Area	Compact	
Floodway / Floodway Fringe	No	
Overlay	Yes	
Wellfield Protection Area	No	
Site Plan	N/A	
Site Plan (Amended)	N/A	
Elevations	N/A	
Elevations (Amended)	N/A	
Landscape Plan	N/A	
Findings of Fact	N/A	
Findings of Fact (Amended)	N/A	
C-S/D-P Statement	N/A	

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Plan

- Marion County Land Use Plan Pattern Book (2019)
- Blue Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan (2018)
- The Near Eastside Quality of Life Plan (2020)

Pattern Book / Land Use Plan

- The Marion County Land Use Plan Pattern Book (2019) recommends traditional neighborhood development for the subject site.
- The Traditional Neighborhood typology includes a full spectrum of housing types, ranging from single family homes to large-scale multifamily housing. The development pattern of this typology should be compact and well-connected, with access to individual parcels by an alley when practical. Building form should promote the social connectivity of the neighborhood, with clearly defined public, semi-public, and private spaces. Infill development should continue the existing visual pattern, rhythm, or orientation of surrounding buildings when possible. A wide range of neighborhood serving businesses, institutions, and amenities should be present. Ideally, most daily needs are within walking distance. This typology usually has a residential density of 5 to 15 dwelling units per acre, but a higher density is recommended if the development is within a quarter mile of a frequent transit line, greenway, or park.
- **Small-Scale Offices, Retailing, and Personal or Professional Services**

- If proposed within one-half mile along an adjoining street of an existing or approved residential development, then connecting, continuous pedestrian infrastructure between the proposed site and the residential development (sidewalk, greenway, or off-street path) should be in place or provided.
- Should be located at intersections and limited to an aggregate of 1 acre per intersection.
- Should be limited to areas and parcels with adequate space for required screening and buffering.
- Automotive uses (such as gas stations and auto repair) and uses requiring a distance of separation of greater than 20 feet under the zoning ordinance (such as liquor stores, adult uses, and drive-through lanes) are excluded.
- Mixed-use structures are preferred.
- Should not include outdoor display of merchandise.

Red Line / Blue Line / Purple Line TOD Strategic Plan

- The property falls within the Blue Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan (2018). The closest station is within a ½ mile south at the intersection of Washington Street and Linwood Avenue.
- This station is classified as a Walkable Neighborhood Typology that would promote a mix of uses at station area and primarily residential beyond, maximum of 3 stories throughout, with no front or side setbacks at core: zero to 15-foot front setbacks and zero to 20-foot side setbacks at periphery, and a mix of multi-family and single-family housing. Structured parking at the core and attractive surface parking at the periphery is recommended.

Neighborhood / Area Specific Plan

- The site falls within The Near Eastside Quality of Life Plan (2020).
- A Placemaking and Infrastructure Priority is to build stronger and safer connections for cyclists and pedestrians within and to commercial corridors such as 10th Street, Washington Street, New York Street, and Michigan Street
- Another Priority would be to extend protected bike lanes on either New York Street or Michigan Street (or both) to improve connectivity between downtown and out towards Irvington.

Infill Housing Guidelines

- Not Applicable to the Site.

Indy Moves

(Thoroughfare Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, Greenways Master Plan)

- Not Applicable to the Site.



ZONING HISTORY

Zoning History – Site

95-UV2-26; 4545 East Michigan Street (subject site), Variance of use of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to provide for outdoor display and sale of automobiles (not permitted), temporarily permitted by petition 93-UV2-11 (expiring on February 9, 1995), **granted**.

93-UV2-11; 4545 East Michigan Street (subject site), Variance of use of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to provide for the outdoor display and sale of automobiles, **granted for a period of two years expiring on February 9, 1995**.

89-UV2-12; 4545 East Michigan Street (subject site), Variance of use of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to provide for the service and outdoor display and sale of automobiles without sufficient parking and perimeter yards, **denied**.

Zoning History – Vicinity

2017-ZON-077; 4501 East Michigan Street (west of site), Rezoning of 0.15 acre, from the D-5 District, to the MU-2 classification, **approved**.

2009-ZON-058; 4606 East Michigan Street (northeast of site), Rezoning of 0.115 acre, from the D-5 District, to the C-3C classification to provide for corridor commercial uses, **approved**.

98-Z-84; 4410 to 4424 East Michigan Street (northwest of site), Rezone 0.5 acre from C-2 and D-5 to SU-1, **approved**.

92-Z-76; 4501 East Michigan Street (west of site), Rezoning of 1.0 acre, being in the D-5 district, to the C-7 classification to provide for the sale of automobiles, **withdrawn**.

88-Z-75; 4428 East Michigan Street (northwest of site), Rezoning of 0.12 acre from D-5 to C-3, **approved**.

EXHIBITS

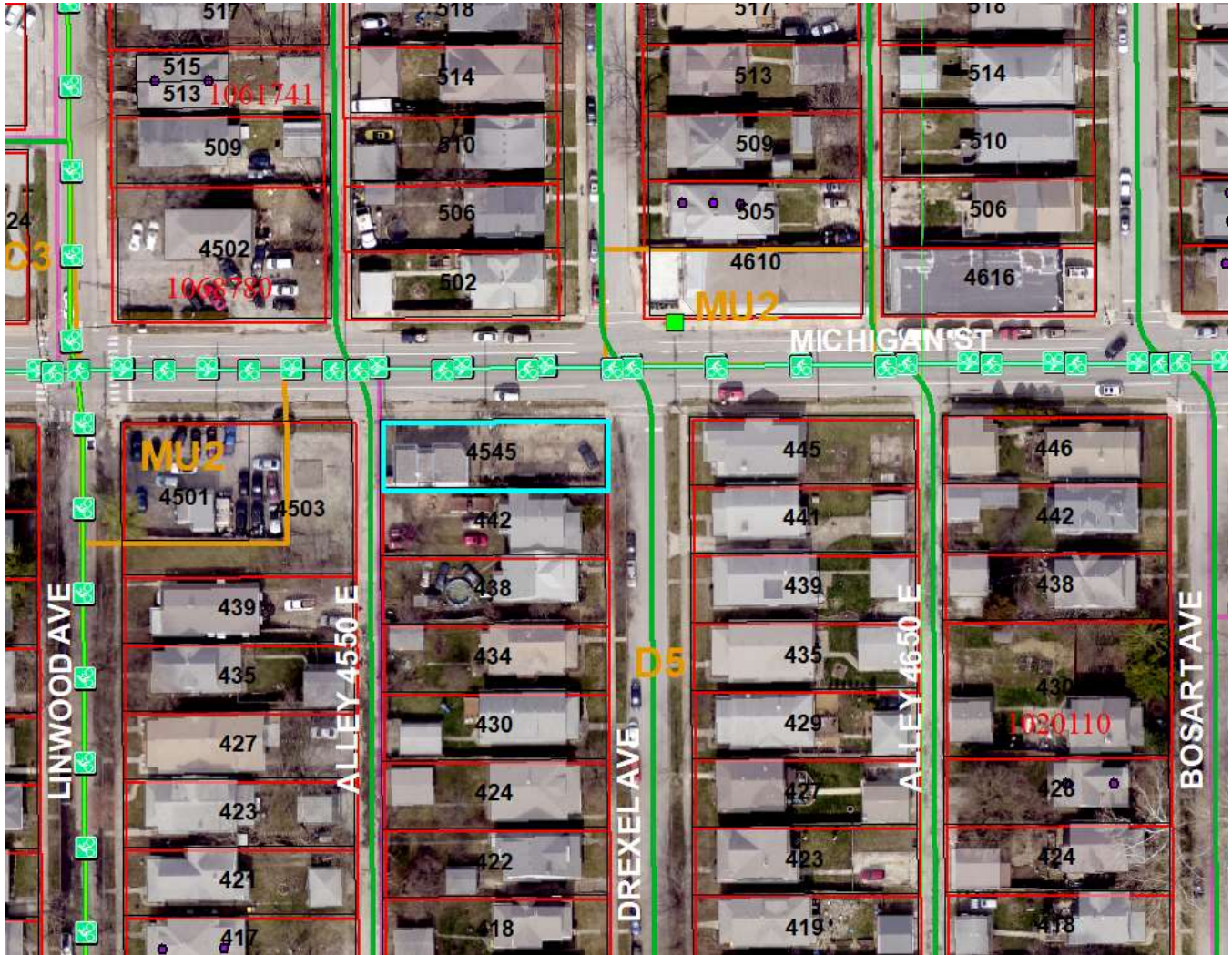




Photo of the eastern portion of the site looking south.



Photo of the western portion of the site looking south.



Photo of the adjacent alley west of the site and undeveloped lot.



Photo of the subject site looking east.



Photo of the subject site looking west.



Photo of the single-family dwelling south of the site.



Photo of the single-family dwellings east of the site.



Photo of the residential dwelling north of the site.



Photo of the residential accessory structure north of the site.