

## **2719 Erie Avenue in Hyde Park Planned Development Public Staff Conference Notes January 28, 2025**

The Public Staff Conference for a proposed zone change from Commercial Neighborhood Pedestrian Neighborhood Business District (CN-P-B) to Planned Development (PD) at 2719 Erie Avenue within Urban Design Overlay District 4 (UDOD #4) in Hyde Park and UDOD permission to construct a mixed-use development on the property was held on January 28, 2025, virtually over Zoom. The meeting began at 6:00 PM and ended at 9:28 PM, lasting for a total of 3 hours and 28 minutes.

There were seven members of City Staff present to facilitate the meeting, answer questions, and take notes. This included six members of the Department of City Planning and Engagement, and one from the City of Cincinnati's Law Department. The applicant team was also present to explain the project and answer questions.

There were 528 members of the public who registered for the meeting, and 343 who logged on for any amount of time. There were also about 20 people who watched together in one room. Of the registrants, 70% indicated that they lived in Hyde Park. 85% identified as homeowners, 6% as renters, and 7% preferred not to say. Census data indicates that 60% of Hyde Park residents are homeowners, and 40% are renters.<sup>1</sup> 73% of registrants identified as White/Caucasian, and 21% preferred not to say, and Census data that shows that 85% of residents of Hyde Park identified as White/Caucasian.<sup>2</sup> For age ranges, 10% of registrants were 18-34, 33% were 35-54, and 50% were 55+. This compares to Census data that shows 33% of Hyde Park residents are 18-34, 34% are 35-54, and 25% are 55+.<sup>3</sup>

The meeting began with a presentation by staff from the Department of City Planning and Engagement to discuss the City's review process, background of the request, the basics of zoning, and information about Planned Developments (PD) and Urban Design Overlay Districts (UDODs) within the City of Cincinnati. The applicant team then presented details about the project and their engagement process, provided responses to some concerns, and shared project renderings. City Staff then began facilitation of the public comment portion of the meeting. The presentation PDF with slides from both City Staff and the applicant team is available on the City's website for this project at: [www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/projects/active/proposed-zone-change-to-planned-development-at-2719-erie-avenue-in-hyde-park/](http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/projects/active/proposed-zone-change-to-planned-development-at-2719-erie-avenue-in-hyde-park/).

There were 62 attendees who provided comments or questions. 58 speakers stated they were opposed to, or had concerns about the project as currently proposed, and 4 speakers were in support. Speakers expressed a variety of concerns about the project. The most common concerns were:

- The proposed buildings are too large
- The height and use do not match the existing zoning
- The project would ruin the "charm", "existing character", and "aesthetic" of the neighborhood
- The parking and traffic situation would become much worse
- There would be a negative impact on pedestrian safety, especially nearby Hyde Park School

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates Table B25004

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates Table P1

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2018-2022 5-Year Estimates Table B01001

While many stated that they would like to see development and investment on the proposed site, they wanted to limit the height of the buildings to the existing zoning district at 50-feet. Speakers also stated that the multiple existing buildings around Hyde Park Square that are taller than 50 feet should not be used as examples of design precedent. Some attendees suggested that the project was not in keeping with the recent Connected Communities initiative. In response to a question about the height of the project, the applicant team indicated that the additional floors were needed to pay for the three-story underground parking garage. Regarding questions about a traffic study, the applicant said that they were working with the Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTe). The applicant stated that they paid a consultant to do the study, which DOTe will review, and then determine if it should be approved.

Members from the Hyde Park Square business community stated that they objected to the characterization from the applicant team that the businesses were dying and said that they were instead thriving. They indicated that they have seen negative effects of recent construction on business sales, and that there could be negative long-term effects of the proposed project on their business and their rents.

Some speakers stated that they were worried about sewer and water infrastructure becoming stressed beyond capacity, a high water table, negative impacts to emergency vehicle response times, increased property taxes, and that the project could block out sunlight in Hyde Park Square. The applicant team responded to the sunlight concern by stating they showed an image of a sun study in the presentation, and that the shadows would not be very different from those cast by the existing *À L'aise* building.

Other speakers thought that the green space in new plaza area looked too small, and didn't like the artificial turf proposed. The applicant responded that the plaza was larger than people were claiming, and that having artificial turf was necessary to have a high-quality of maintenance due to the large numbers of people potentially using the space. Some speakers did not want the hotel use, while others supported it. Other speakers questioned the financial feasibility of the project, stating that there were plenty of other hotels in the area, so this one was not needed.

Speakers brought up questions about the applicant team itself, stating that the applicant went back on promises in developments in Northside and the *ila* building, and that the quality of buildings were not good at Factory 52. Others wanted attendees to know that the City Manager used to work for PLK, which is part of the applicant team. The City Law Department responded by saying if there concerns about conflicts of interest, members of the public could contact the City's Ethics Hotline ([www.cincinnati-oh.gov/law/ethics/hotline/](http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/law/ethics/hotline/)). Some speakers stated that the applicant misled them during the initial survey, which the applicant responded that the survey was approved by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Council (HPNC). The HPNC stated that this was not fully true, and that because the HPNC was uncomfortable with the survey, they sent out a second survey after the first.

There were speakers who were in support of the project, stating that investment was good for the neighborhood, and they were excited by new amenities, even if they did not think the project was perfect. They said that concerns about building height, traffic, shadows and parking were overblown and stated that many of the buildings that contribute to the "charm" of Hyde Park Square do not comply with the existing zoning. Some speakers stated that there are studies that density is not necessarily correlated with congestion, but parking was correlated, and that their experiences in other cities showed it is important for neighborhoods to embrace development. Overall, supporters of the project stated that there are tradeoffs in projects like this, and that the benefits outweighed the potential negative effects.