

Jefferson-Chalmers WATER Project

Water Access, Technology, Education and Recreation

Keep Sewage out of Basements & Canals • Keep Stormwater out of the System • Keep Great Lakes out of the Neighborhood

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10 March 2024 (via email)

Councilwoman Gabriel Santiago-Romero, Chair and Members
City of Detroit City Council – Public Health and Safety Committee
Coleman A. Young Municipal Building
2 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI. 48226

RE: Request to Deny Approval Item 10.10 - Petition No. x2024-048 MAP-23-73

Councilwoman Gabriel Santiago-Romero, Chair and Members of the Public Health and Safety Committee:

Resolution 10.10 on the City Council Agenda of March 5, 2024 was referred to your committee and contains an application that should be rejected and held until after the Budget process, currently underway, is complete.

Petition No. x2024-048 MAP-23-73 is being presented by the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) as part of a request for the Vacation, 'Outright', of Freud Street and public alleys, lying between Conner Street and Navahoe Street. The purpose of this proposed Vacation is to build a new, approximately five-story, one acre pump station.

Per Chapter 43 of the Detroit City Code, Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places, the Department of Public Works (DPW) oversees the application process for changes in the public right-of-way and is bringing forward this resolution may have failed to comply with their own requirements (<https://detroitmi.gov/departments/department-public-works/maps-and-records>), Submission Requirements, Vacations, for Petitions which states:

"Any vacation of right-of-way requires proper community engagement with all adjacent land owners. Applicants must obtain a letter of support from all adjacent land owners before the application can be accepted. Blocks that are residential only, may obtain signatures of 2/3 or 66% of adjacent residential owners."

Later in DPW's Submission Requirements it further states, "Incomplete applications will not be accepted." We know of no effort on behalf of the applicant to engage the community in any way and therefore, the application should have been rejected on its face by DPW.

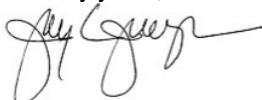
Additionally, vacating the existing street does not eliminate the private rights in the nature of an easement held by lot owners in the same subdivision to use the street, which rights arise out of the original plat. Any attempt to usurp those private property rights may require an eminent domain taking and compensation to each of the property owners in the subdivisions for loss of their easement rights. It would be important to determine if the same approach to the acquisition of properties proposed for the project would have to comply to similar requirements.

Through Speaker Joe Tate's Office, we are making an effort to gather leaders to discuss this project with GLWA and they have offered to withdraw their application as a demonstration of good faith. We have not received written confirmation of GLWA's withdrawal and we expect that the application should be removed from consideration until it is in compliance with DPW's requirements and until they fulfill their withdrawal commitment.

Finally, we reject any attempt to propose the encroachment of any industrial use on a residential neighborhood. The pump station is not only grossly out of scale but an incompatible use. There is more than enough adequate land adjacent to other industrial uses within a block of the site where the proposed pump station will not detrimentally impact the community.

Taken together, we respectfully request you deny approval for the above captioned project and thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 313.802.2294 or info@jeffersonchalmerswaterproject.org.

Sincerely yours,



Jay C. Juergensen, Lead Organizer

Copy to: Councilwoman Latisha Johnson, District 4