

August 27, 2025

Subject: Request for action - Time is running out on potential Hyde Park Square deal

Dear Mayor Pureval and City Council Members,

We would like to thank Council Members Johnson and Walsh for facilitating Monday's meeting between the Hyde Park Neighborhood Council, Save Hyde Park Square and the Hyde Park Square developer.

Monday's meeting ended in an impasse. Despite progress in other areas, the height of the proposed development remains the central obstacle. Attached are: 1) the community's opening statement; and 2) Hyde Park negotiation position summary updated with areas of alignment to-date.

To be clear, the community welcomes development on Hyde Park Square. We want a deal - one that benefits the city, the neighborhood, and the developer. A deal that demonstrates smart, collaborative growth and reflects the voices of our citizens and small businesses.

At the meeting, the developer offered five-story buildings using wood construction. This adds roughly four feet in height vs. the proposed concrete construction. The community accepted the tradeoff. Then the offer was withdrawn, with the claim that wood construction could not be made attractive. Yet in the 85.5-foot project approved by City Council on April 23, wood construction was proposed and was promised to be attractive. Something doesn't add up.

We need City Council's help. The neighborhood has been clear: no buildings taller than five stories on Hyde Park Square. We are asking for the deal we were offered - or a creative alternative that honors the community's wishes.

If no agreement can be reached, we ask City Council to repeal the April 23 decision for the zone change to a Planned Development (PD). Without a hotel, the development no longer requires a PD designation. Thus, a repeal would restart the development process immediately - and the developer could work within the existing CN-P-B zoning and seek a simple height variance. This would be the quickest way to bring much-needed housing and new retail to Hyde Park Square and avoid the acrimony of a ballot initiative.

Time is running out. City Council's September 4 vote to repeal or put the issue on the ballot is rapidly approaching, with Friday as a key decision date. We are ready to speak with the Mayor or any Council member in the next 24 hours to discuss how the city can help break this stalemate.

This is a pivotal moment. We want to get this right - we truly believe this can be a win for the city, for the neighborhood, and for the developer. **If you have ideas and interest to help facilitate this deal, please contact Ann Williams (513-604-3362) and she can arrange a brief meeting with our team to discuss next steps, ideally in the next day.**

Thank you,

Save Hyde Park Square