

HEARING & ACTION REPORT

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| APPLICATION: | DCP-MPZC-2025-00129, Council Bill 2025-1417 |
| PROPERTY: | 2819 Shadeland Avenue, Parcels 45-A-166 and 45-E-43 |
| PROPERTY OWNER: | Black River Real Estate Development LLC |
| ZONING DISTRICT: | Residential Single Unit Detached – High Density (R1D-H) |
| RCO AND DAM: | Marshall Shadeland Community Group Development Activities Meeting Date – July 1, 2025 |
| PROPOSAL: | Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning map from R1D-H to UC-MU (Urban Center Mixed Use) at the former Horace Mann School site. |
| COUNCIL DISTRICT: | District 6; Councilman Daniel Lavelle |
| MEETING DATE: | July 29, 2025 |

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Council Bill 2025-1417/DCP-MPZC-2025-00129, filed by Councilman Daniel Lavelle, was referred to the Planning Commission by City Council on January 29, 2025 for the Commission's report and recommendation. A copy of the legislation is attached to this report.
2. The legislation proposes a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district on parcels 45-A-166 and 45-E-43 from R1D-H (Residential Single Unit Detached – High Density) to UC-MU (Urban Center – Mixed Use).
3. Per Section 922.05.B.2, an application to amend the boundaries of the Zoning District Map may be proposed by the City Council, the Planning Commission, the owner of the subject property or the owner's agent.
4. The parcels in question are roughly three (3) acres in total, significantly larger than the residential and commercial properties surrounding the site.
5. The site includes the former Horace Mann Elementary School, which closed permanently in 2005-2006. The building has remained vacant since that time. In addition to the building the site includes a play area and ball field. The site is generally flat along Shadeland Avenue and Ancy Way but slopes significantly along Mullins Street and Casement Street.
6. The subject properties are surrounded by the R1D-H district to the north, south, and west, and by the LNC district to the east. The neighborhood is characterized by primarily single family detached homes. Historically, there have been some commercial uses along Shadeland Avenue but some of those uses are no longer operating. There are several vacant parcels in the immediate area. The surrounding zoning districts are characterized as follows:
 - a. The intent of the LNC district is to maintain the small scale and rich diversity of neighborhood-serving commercial districts; promote and enhance the quality of life in adjacent residential areas; and reduce the adverse impacts that are sometimes associated with commercial uses in order to promote compatibility with residential development (904.02.A). The height limit in the LNC district is 45 ft.

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- b. The intent of the R1D-H District is to support development and redevelopment while preserving the character of existing residential neighborhoods (903.01.A). The height limit in the R1D-H district is 40 ft.
- 7. City Planning staff have identified a potential for concern that the proposed UC-MU zoning may be considered as “spot zoning.” This concern has been raised with the Councilman. Staff have suggested that the applicant look at the LNC and R-MU districts as alternatives and to outline those alternatives in their presentation materials at the hearing.
- 8. City Planning staff have noted that the LNC district may be a more contextual district, and if the Housing Needs Assessment amendments are passed by City Council, there would be an option for a height bonus to allow for a larger development with Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) units included, and therefore, could be a viable alternative to the UC-MU zoning. It should be noted, however, that the residential compatibility standards would apply if the site were rezoned to LNC (per 922.15.J) but they would not apply under the UC-MU district.
- 9. Another alternative to the UC-MU district could be the R-MU district. Please see below for a list of the major differences between the UC-MU and R-MU districts as it may pertain to the proposal outlined in the Briefing presentation from July 15.
 - a. The 10 ft. upper story step-back requirement begins at 65 ft. in the UC-MU but is 45 ft. in the R-MU.
 - b. Community Center use would be permitted by-right in the UC-MU but requires an Administrator Exception in the R-MU.
 - c. A Vocational School (Limited) use would require a Special Exception in the R-MU but would be permitted by-right in the UC-MU.
 - d. Vocational School (General) would not be permitted in the R-MU and would require a Special Exception in the UC-MU.
- 10. The applicant has preliminarily suggested proposed affordable/workforce housing and adaptive reuse of the existing school building – both could potentially qualify the applicant for performance points under UC-MU and R-MU zoning. Those are outlined as follows:
 - a. Per (904.08.C.4.c.3 and 915.07.D.4.a-4.d), inclusion of affordable housing would qualify for between one (1) and six (6) points.
 - b. Per (904.08.C.4.c.5 and 915.07.D 6.c), adaptive reuse of an existing building where the shell is restored and retained would qualify for three (3) points.
- 11. In addition to the zone change, the applicant proposes to amend the zoning height map to allow for a maximum height (with bonuses) of 65 ft. and a base height of 50 ft. Because this height map amendment was not introduced as part of the original legislation, it will be added as a condition of the recommendation to City Council. Planning staff are recommending a 45 ft. maximum base height in lieu of the proposed 50 ft. to align it with the surrounding LNC district limits.
- 12. In 2022, the City of Pittsburgh commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment. The Assessment outlined barriers to multi-unit housing development, noting that multi-unit residential (i.e. buildings with 4 or more units) development is restricted to just 23% of the City’s total land area, and that much of that lies in mixed use districts. The Assessment recommends zoning reforms to allow for more multi-unit residential development.
- 13. Per Section 922.05.D, the Commission shall act to recommend approval or denial of the application within ninety (90) days of the receipt of the completed application. The applicant has agreed to an extension to the 90-day requirement to allow for the Hearing on July 29,

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2025. Resolution 2025-1837 was filed authorizing that extension.

14. A Development Activities Meeting (DAM) was held with the Marshall Shadeland Community Group on July 1, 2025. The DAM report is attached.
15. The Marshall Shadeland Community Group has agreed to waive the 30-day requirement between the DAM and the hearing for this project. A copy of that waiver is attached.
16. Per code sections 922.01.C.1 and 922.01.C.2, property owners within 150 feet of the proposed zone change area were notified of the proposal and posted notice was placed on-site 21-days in advance of the July 29, 2025 hearing date.
17. Under Section 922.05.F, the Planning Commission shall review the proposed Zoning Map Amendment according to certain criteria. Not all of the criteria must be given equal consideration by the Planning Commission in reaching a decision. A copy of the applicant's responses to the criteria are attached. The criteria to be considered shall be as follows:
 - a. *The consistency of the proposal with adopted plans and policies of the City;*
 - b. *The convenience and welfare of the public;*
 - c. *The intent and purpose of this Zoning Code;*
 - d. *Compatibility of the proposal with the zoning, uses and character of the neighborhood;*
 - e. *The suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted without the proposed zoning map amendment;*
 - f. *The extent to which approval of the proposed zoning map amendment will detrimentally affect nearby property;*
 - g. *The length of time the subject property has remained vacant as zoned;*
 - h. *Impact of the proposed development on community facilities and services; and*
 - i. *The recommendations of staff.*

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS:

That the Planning Commission of the City of Pittsburgh **MAKES A POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION** on Council Bill 2025-1417, Master Plan/Zone Change Application, DCP-MPZC-2025-00129, for a Zoning Map Amendment to change from R1-D (Single Unit Residential – High Density) to UC-MU (Urban Center Mixed Use) parcels 45-A-166 and 45-E-43 in the Marshall Shadeland neighborhood with the condition that:

1. The maximum and minimum height map be overlain on the subject parcels with a base height of 45 ft. and a maximum height of 65 ft with Performance Points.

SUBMITTED BY: _____

Joseph Fraker, Senior Planner

PLANNING COMMISSION

29 JULY, 2025

Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 01/24/2024)

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

| Logistics | Stakeholders |
|---|--|
| Project Name/Address: Horace Mann School 2819 Shadeland Ave | Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident): Marshall Shadeland Civic Group Applicant Applicant's architects - DLA |
| Parcel Number(s): 45-A-166 | |
| ZDR Application Number: DCP-MPZC-2025-00129 [Bill 2025-1417] | |
| Meeting Location: Online | |
| Date: 7/1/25 | |
| Meeting Start Time: 6pm | |
| Applicant: Black River Development | Approx. Number of Attendees: 18 |
| Boards and/or Commissions Request(s): Planning Commission | |

How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.

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| <p>Horace Mann Village Development – This proposal is for a project that includes the redesign and renovation of former Horace Mann School into multi-unit residential space with on-site workforce development for seniors and low- to medium-income families. The project proposes having 108 units of affordable workforce housing broken down into 30 studio units, 55 1-bedroom units, and 23 2-bedroom units. It also proposes 76 1-bedroom units of senior housing.</p> <p>Applicant presented a video overviewing the vision and benefits of the project followed by an oral overview of the project's process and scope.</p> <p>[information presented in video]</p> <p>Horace Mann Village is a workforce housing and senior housing development project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The vision for Horace Mann Village is to provide housing<ul style="list-style-type: none">For working people that deserve a good place to live and services to help develop their careersFor seniors to age in place in their own neighborhood <p>“Workforce housing” is defined as a residential space that has on-site job training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Residents will have access to Partner4Work services <p>Residents will be eligible for housing based on their income.</p> <p>[information presented orally]</p> |
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Zoning Changes - The site of the former Horace Mann School (where the project is located on 2819 Shadeland Ave) is currently zoned for single family residential use. This DAM was required because the applicant filed for a zoning amendment from Single-Unit Detached Residential – High Density (R1D-H) to Urban Center Mixed Use (UC-MU). The former school building will not have any residential units, it will be repurposed as a community center with workforce development services.

Affordability - The project is meant to serve working people whose incomes are too high to qualify for housing assistance at the HUD income limit for the Pittsburgh metro area, but too low for market-rate units to be sustainably affordable. The target rates for affordability are 20% of the units will be reserved for households at 50% AMI or 40% of the units will be reserved for households at 60% AMI (\$45,100 for single-person household). The applicant recognizes the reality of many Pittsburghers who may work jobs with wages under \$30 an hour that deserve a safe, clean, affordable place to live.

Applicant's Workforce Development Vision - The workforce development component of the project is an opportunity to address emerging industries in tech in Pittsburgh. With the Northside producing jobs at employers like Rivers Casino, CCAC, and Allegheny Health Network, the project can meet needs for training that helps Pittsburghers get state-of-the-art jobs and stabilize their places in the region's changing economy.

Process of developing this project

- Process started in 2019
 - the applicant explained that the process has been lengthy because they wanted to incorporate community feedback, visions, and desires into the project as much as possible
 - Horace Mann School had been closed and sitting empty for seven years at the time the applicant chose it for the project site
- The next step after the zoning change is approved by the city is to stabilize and fix the roof of the old Horace Mann school building (\$1 million cost)
- After stabilizing the existing structure, the applicant plans to do visioning with the community for programming in the site's community center
 - Examples of programming could include a workout facility, tech training for seniors, a community kitchen, etc.
- The project has recently received \$4.8 million in grants, it will cost \$65 million in total

Project replicates successful "village" projects in Washington, DC and Denver that have been successful for both their residents as well as their communities at large.

Input and Responses

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| What does the timeline look like? | Once zoning is approved, to get everything from shovels in the ground to building done it will take approximately 24 months. |

| Questions and Comments from Attendees | Responses from Applicants |
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| | Roof is most immediate need for us once the zoning is approved. The outside of the building is gorgeous and remains intact, but we need a new roof on it just to stabilize it so that the inside doesn't get damaged to the point where we would have to completely gut it. We now have the funds to get the roof done, which is \$1 million. |
| Did I miss a rendering of the housing? | <p>Yes ma'am, we showed both the workforce housing structure and senior housing in the video.</p> <p>Workforce housing is a combination of studio, one-, and two-bedroom apartments.</p> <p>Senior housing is one-bedroom apartments.</p> <p>The senior housing will be 100% seniors – it is not for people that are not seniors with disabilities, it is not that type of senior housing. Everyone in there will be seniors</p> |
| <p>What niche of workforce development will this project be filling?</p> <p>There are other workforce development opportunities in the Northside. The casino runs a gambling school at CCAC, they just put in a \$30 million building for new industrial technology, coding is being covered by the tech elevator over on North Ave. What niche are you filling?</p> | Pittsburgh is working to become a green city in the sense of self-driving cars, producing batteries like in Hazelwood Green, and the Energy Innovation Center. Partners4Work is the engine for workforce development for Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, this region as a whole. They are our main partner. Major employers in this region go to them to develop training programs for their workforces. The needs of this region aren't being met by the individual programs you mentioned alone. |
| From the chat: So what programs are you going to have? You just talked in platitudes . You didn't really answer my question. And it sounds like you are just duplicating what is already going on in the Northside... | We are not duplicating services, this region as a whole with all the new development going on, the need for workforce development is very pressing (ex of Nippon deal and Duolingo) |
| Will the facility have a common area or a dining room area? Will you be serving them? Is there going to be a common area for them to eat? This isn't like an old folks home is it? Is there a common area for them to congregate together? | This village concept includes common space for seniors and young professionals to live together - the workforce development center will be common area. A huge benefit of this project is that it will create common space for seniors and working people to commune and learn from each other. We do not want to segregate these two groups. This is definitely not an old folks home, and this is definitely not a "project." |

Other Notes

Marshall Shadeland Civic Group is supportive of the Horace Mann Village project. The RCO will email to the Planning Commission waiving the 30-day requirement between DAM and Planning Commission Hearing and allow for this Zoning Map Amendment to go before Planning Commission at its July 29 meeting.

Planner completing report: AD

**Email from Marshall Shadeland Civic Group agreeing to 30-day waiver
7/8/2025**

From: Marshall Shadeland Civic Group <brightwoodcivic@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 11:41 AM

To: PlanningComission@pittsburghpa.gov <PlanningComission@pittsburghpa.gov>; Fraker, Joseph <joseph.fraker@pittsburghpa.gov>; Tarannum, Nazia <Nazia.Tarannum@pittsburghpa.gov>

Subject: MSCG Waiver

To Whom It May Concern,

On **Tuesday, July 1st, 2025**, the **Marshall-Shadeland Civic Group** unanimously passed a resolution during our **Board, Community, and DAM (Development Activities Meeting)** to **waive the 30-day requirement** between the DAM and the public hearing. Please consider this official notification of our support for moving forward without the 30-day waiting period.

Marshall-Shadeland Civic Group

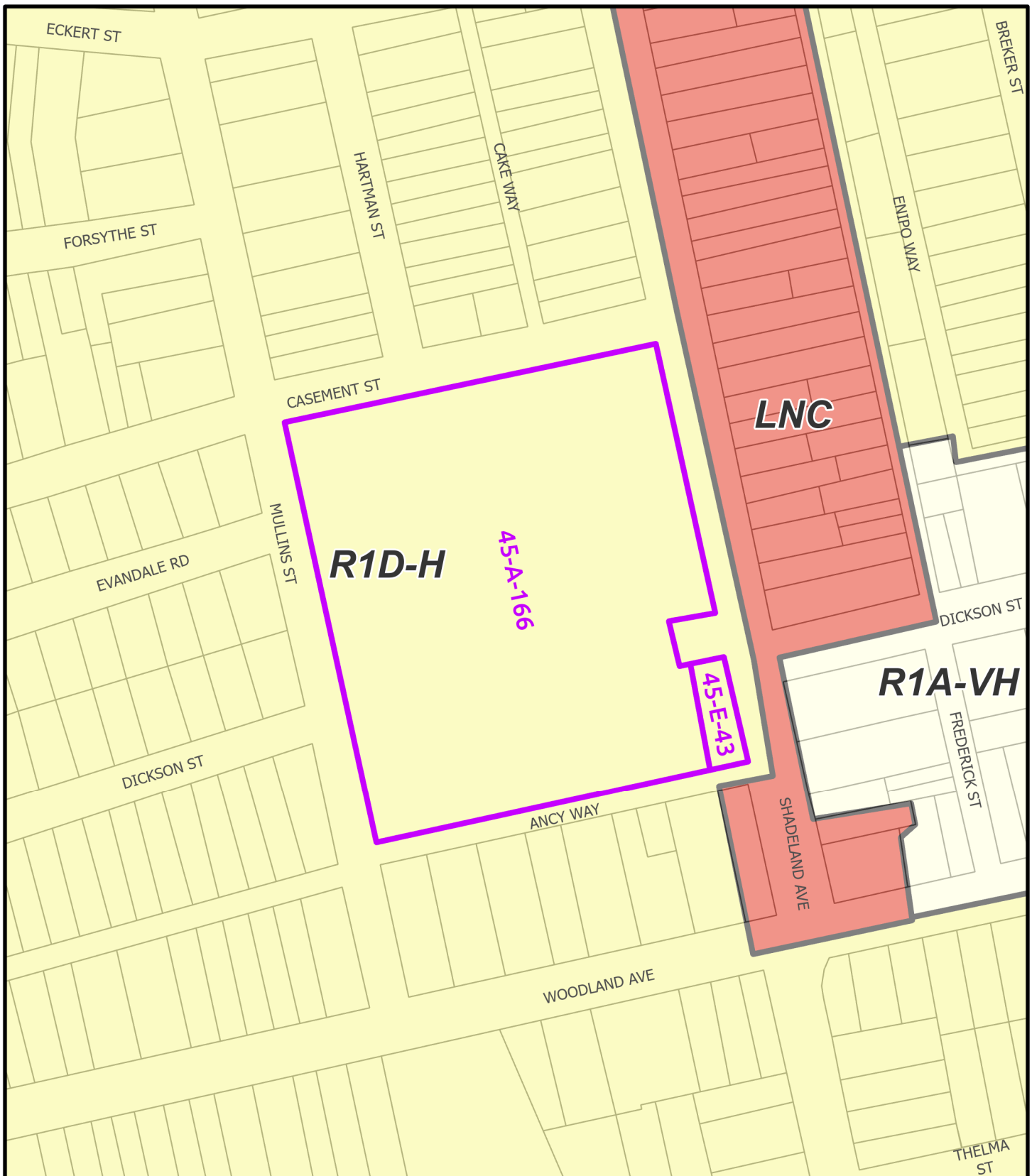
P.O Box 100001

Pittsburgh, Pa 15233




<https://marshall-shadeland.org/>


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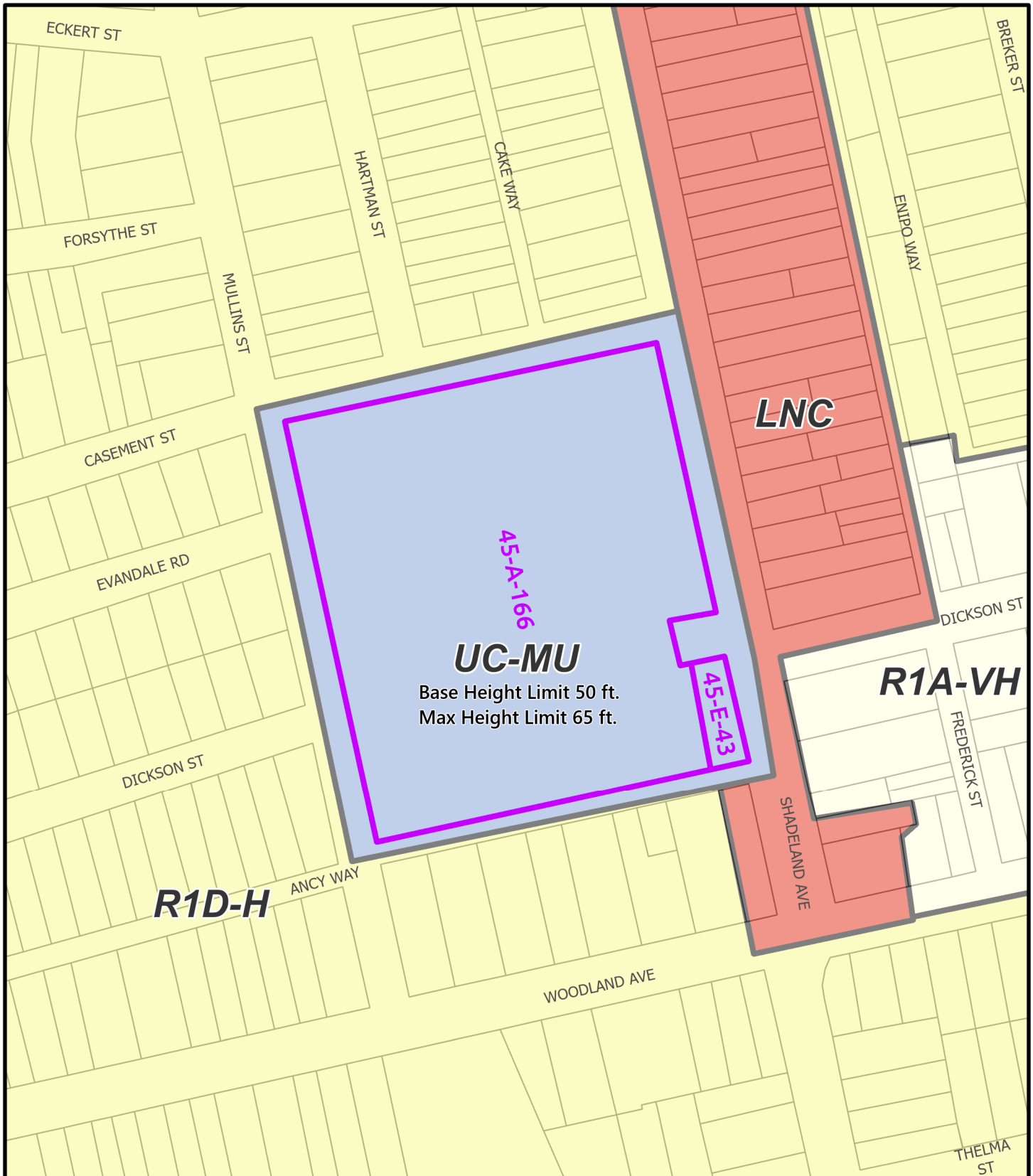
Horace Mann School Site - Current Zoning

-  Local Neighborhood Commercial
-  Residential Single-Unit Detached High-Density
-  Residential Single-Unit Attached Very High-Density





-  Parcels
-  Affected Parcels

0 100 200
Feet

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JULY 2025



Horace Mann School Site - Proposed Zoning & Height Limits

-  Local Neighborhood Commercial
-  Residential Single-Unit Detached High-Density
-  Residential Single-Unit Attached Very High-Density
-  Urban Center Mixed Use

-  Parcels
-  Affected Parcels

0 100 200
Feet

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