

IN RE: APPEAL OF READING STORAGE, : BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING  
LLC, RELATIVE TO A PROPERTY : BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING,  
LOCATED AT 333 N. 14<sup>TH</sup> STREET, CITY OF : PENNSYLVANIA  
READING, BERKS COUNTY, :  
PENNSYLVANIA : APPEAL NO. 2018-19  
: :  
: VARIANCE, INTERPRETATION  
: AND/OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION

**DECISION OF THE ZONING HEARING  
BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING**

AND NOW, this 8th day of August, 2018, a hearing having been held on July 11, 2018, upon the application of Reading Storage, LLC, notice of such hearing having been first sent and advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance, as amended, the Zoning Hearing Board of the City of Reading (hereinafter referred to as the "Zoning Board") renders the following decision:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Zoning Board finds the following facts:

1. Applicant is Reading Storage, LLC, a Pennsylvania Limited Liability Company, with a principal address of 500 N. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19604 (hereinafter referred to as the "Applicant").
2. Applicant has an equitable interest in the property located at 333 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19604 (hereinafter referred to as the "Subject Property").
3. The fee simple owner of the Subject Property, Hillside Swimming Association, has granted Applicant permission to seek the requested relief.
4. The Subject Property is located in the R-3 Residential Zoning District as that term and district is defined by the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Reading, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Zoning Ordinance").
5. Applicant was represented at the hearing by Joan London, Esquire, of Kozloff Stoudt, 2640 Westview Drive, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

6. Applicant seeks a use variance and all associated variances, special exceptions and interpretations to construct a 25,000 to 30,000 square foot enclosed self-storage facility with an exterior gravel lot for vehicular parking.

7. Specifically, Applicant is requesting the following relief from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance:

a. Section 600-804.B. (R-3 Zoning District) – use variance to allow self-storage facility to be constructed in the R-3 Residential Zoning District.

b. Section 600-804.A. (R-3 Zoning District) – requesting to use the setback requirements as by right self-storage facilities in the C-N Zone (600-809.A).

c. Section 600-1302 (Fence and wall heights) – requesting to use the existing 6 foot fence and add barbed wire for purposes of security resulting in a total height that exceeds 6 feet.

d. Section 600-1304.A. (Prohibited fences, walls, materials or similar structures) – requesting to use the existing 6 foot fence and add barbed wire for purposes of security.

e. Section 600-1401.A. (Buffer strips) – requesting variance to eliminate the buffer strip requirement.

f. Section 600-1401.C. (Screening) – requesting variance to eliminate the buffer strip requirement.

g. Section 1402 (Screening) – requesting a variance to eliminate the need for screening.

h. Section 600-1505 (Sidewalks) – seeking relief stating no pedestrian sidewalks exist along the frontage and the project will not generate pedestrian traffic.

i. Section 600-1602.A. (Design and construction) – requesting a variance to install gravel in the parking area.

j. Section 600-1603 (Off-street parking standards) – seeking relief stating customers will park in front of units.

8. The Subject Property has been vacant for approximately ten (10) years.

9. The Subject Property was previously a public swimming pool operated by the Hillside Swimming Association.
10. Applicant proposes to demolish all of the existing block buildings located at the Subject Property and to replace the block buildings with steel self-storage buildings.
11. Applicant proposes two hundred (200) to two hundred fifty (250) storage units at the Subject Property.
12. Applicant testified the storage units will not exceed twenty feet (20') in height.
13. Applicant testified the proposed entrance will be off of Elm Street and a driveway will loop around the entire property and exit on Elm Street.
14. Applicant testified the facility would be open twenty-four (24) hours a day.
15. Applicant testified the Subject Property will be secured with fencing and a lacking gate which will be accessed via a key card which will be obtained under a lease between the Applicant and the customer.
16. Applicant is proposing site lighting that meets or exceeds the current Zoning Ordinance standards for glare, light spill, shielding and security.
17. Applicant currently has two (2) full time employees and one (1) part-time employee.
18. Applicant testified his office is located two (2) blocks from the Subject Property.
19. The Subject Property is surrounded by residences.
20. The use is not in keeping with a residential neighborhood.
21. The proposed relief is solely for financial purposes.
22. There is no hardship at the Subject Property which prohibits it from being used in conformity with the Zoning Ordinance.

### **DISCUSSION**


Applicant seeks a use variance and all associated variances, special exceptions and interpretations to construct a 25,000 to 30,000 square foot enclosed self-storage facility with an exterior gravel lot for vehicular parking.


**CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. Applicant is Reading Storage, LLC.
  2. The Subject Property is located at 333 North 14<sup>th</sup> Street, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19604.
  3. The Subject Property is located in the R-3 Residential Zoning District.
  4. Applicant seeks a use variance and all associated variances, special exceptions and interpretations to construct a 25,000 to 30,000 square foot enclosed self-storage facility with an exterior gravel lot for vehicular parking.
  5. In order to grant the requested variance, Applicant must show it has satisfied the relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance.
  6. After reviewing the Applicant's request in detail, the Zoning Hearing Board enters the following decision:
    - a. Applicant is hereby denied the variance because no hardship exists at the Subject Property and the proposed used is a detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood.
- The decision of this Board is by a vote of 5 to 0.

**ZONING HEARING BOARD OF THE CITY  
OF READING**

  
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PHILIP RABENA, CHAIRMAN

  
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THOMAS FOX

  
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JEFFREY GATTONE

  
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WILLIAM HARST

  
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JARED BARCZ