

Martires Adames and Kathy Saldana (“Applicant”) are seeking approval for Conditional Use Application 2021-03 in order to permit a “banquet hall” or similar use that will require building modifications and site improvements at 2040 Centre Avenue (“Subject Property”). The proposed use (banquet hall) is permitted by Conditional Use within the Manufacturing Commercial (M-C) Zoning District.

**(1) Background**

The Subject Property is located at 2040 Centre Avenue (15530819601612), which is a 15,300 +/- square foot lot that contains an existing building that was previously occupied by a bank or financial institution, which is a permitted by right in the M-C Zoning District. [Zoning 600-811.B(1)]

The Applicant intends to utilize the existing building and property as a commercial banquet hall, which is permitted by conditional use within the M-C Zoning District. Therefore, a conditional use application should be submitted for review and consideration. A “banquet hall” is hereby defined by the Zoning Ordinance:

*Banquet Hall: A facility that is rented for wedding receptions and similar special events and which does not meet the definition of a tavern or nightclub. The use may also occur as an accessory use to a hotel/motel.*

The Zoning Office initially denied Zoning Permit 2021-557 on January 27, 2022. The Applicant has been advised that a Conditional Use Application must be approved by City Council before a Zoning Permit can be issued for the “banquet hall” on the Subject Property. The Applicant was also advised that condition may be applied by City Council. [Zoning 600-811.B(3)(a), 600-606 and 600-1204]

The Subject Property is bounded by: Cathedral Street and an off-street parking facility to the north; Centre Avenue and an access spur for PA Route 61 along with commercial and industrial uses to the east; First Energy Stadium to the south; and an unimproved parking facility owned by First Energy Stadium to the west. The Subject Property does have frontage along Cathedral Street as well as the access spur for PA Route 61.

**(2) Site Design and Dimensional Requirements**

The Applicant has prepared and submitted a draft site plan with Zoning Permit Application 2021-557. The following dimensional requirements apply to a banquet hall within the M-C Zoning District:

Minimum Lot Size (square feet)	Maximum Building Coverage	Maximum Impervious Coverage	Maximum Height	Minimum Lot Width	Minimum Front Yard Setback	Minimum Rear Yard Setback	Minimum Side Yard Setback
20,000	50%	90%	60 feet	80 feet	15 feet	20 feet	10 feet

Based upon the information submitted with Conditional Use Application 2022-01 and Zoning Permit Application 2021-557, it appears that the existing lot area (is classified as a nonconforming lot since the existing lot area 15,300 square feet) is less than the required 20,000 square feet for a permitted use within the M-C Zoning District. It appears that the site does comply with the coverage and dimensional requirements for the M-C Zoning District. [Zoning 600-607 and 600-811.A]

**(3) Provisions for Nonconforming Lots**

The existing lot (15,300 square feet) is classified as nonconforming since it is less than the standard requirement (20,000 square feet) as specified for the M-C Zoning District. A nonconforming lot may be occupied by a conforming use or the use may change from one conforming use to another conforming use provided that any required lot area or site improvements do not create a conflict with the provisions specified for lot area, coverage and dimensional criteria specified for the M-C Zoning District. The Applicant should consult with the Zoning Office to verify compliance prior to the public hearing for the Conditional Use Application. [Zoning 600-607 and 600-811.A]

**(4) Provisions Relating to a Conditional Use Application**

Part 12 of the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance provides the general criteria that should be applied to Special Exception Applications and Conditional Use Application. Section 1204 of the Zoning Ordinance provides specific provisions relating to the application, review and standards that should be applied to Conditional Use Application 2021-03. More specifically, Section 1204.D of the Zoning Ordinance includes the following standards that should be applied to this case:

*D. Standards. Conditional uses shall meet the specific standards established for each use by this chapter and all other applicable zoning district requirements and general regulations established by this chapter. In addition, the following standards shall be met:*

- (1) The use shall be one which is specifically authorized as a conditional use in the zoning district wherein the applicant is seeking a conditional use.*
- (2) Services and utilities shall be made available to adequately service the proposed use.*
- (3) The use will not generate traffic such that hazardous or unduly congested conditions will result.*
- (4) The use is appropriate to the site in question.*
- (5) The use shall not adversely affect the character of the general neighborhood, or the health and safety of residents or workers on adjacent properties and in the general neighborhood.*
- (6) The applicant shall demonstrate, as a condition to approval of his application, that the standards in this subsection and those specified elsewhere in this chapter for the use in question would be met.*
- (7) The City Council may impose such additional safeguards as are necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.*

These standards should be applied to Conditional Use Application 2021-03. [Zoning Part 12]

**(5) Site Accessibility, Parking and Loading Requirements**

The site has existing driveways for vehicular ingress and egress along Cathedral Street and the access spur for Centre Avenue. The Applicant has the capabilities to provide 11 off-street parking spaces on the Subject Property. It is our understanding that there may be an existing lease agreement between the Applicant and the City of Reading for the use of the adjacent parking area on the south side of the Subject Property that could provide 22 additional off-street parking spaces. An off-street loading space should also be established or designated on the Subject Property.

The Zoning Ordinance does not provide any specific criteria for the number of spaces required for a “banquet hall”. The Applicant intends to utilize the 11 off-street parking spaces on the Subject Property plus lease additional off-street parking spaces from another property within 300 feet of the Subject Property. The lease option with the City of Reading for the 22 off-street parking spaces on the south side of the property is most desirable based upon proximity and pedestrian accessibility. Further discussion with the Zoning Office is advised to determine if 33 off-street parking spaces will be sufficient for the “banquet hall”. If necessary, a zoning variance will be required for off-street parking and off-street loading. These issues should be resolved as part of the Conditional Use Application or as part of a Land Development Plan Applications. [Zoning Parts 15 and 16]

**(6) Land Development Plan**

The Applicant has submitted an informal site plan with Conditional Use Application 2022-01. The Applicant has been advised that the proposed use (banquet hall) may require further evaluation for zoning and land use compliance as compared to the former use (bank or financial institution). Based upon the conversion and redevelopment efforts associated with this project, the Applicant should submit a Revised Plan or Record or Change of Use as part of a Minor Land Development Plan, which should be submitted to the Planning Commission for review and consideration. [Chapters 515 and 600 of the City of Reading Code]

**(7) Supplemental Requirements**

As part of the Revised Plan of Record or Minor Land Development Plan, the Applicant shall be required to demonstrate that the proposed commercial use (banquet hall) can comply with the provisions relating to: vehicular site accessibility; off-street parking and loading; stormwater management; sanitary sewage disposal; water supply; curbs and sidewalks; emergency management and response; signs; exterior lighting; landscaping and buffer yards; solid waste management; and other factors relating to the proposed site improvements on this property. [Chapters 505, 515 and 600 of the City of Reading Code]

**(8) Building Code Requirements**

A Zoning Permit Application and Building Permit Application shall be required for the proposed building renovations and conversions that shall be relevant to the Subject Property. The Applicant is advised that architectural plans, rendering and/or elevations shall be required to demonstrate compliance with building code requirements. [Zoning Part 3; SALDO Part 6]

**(9) Disclaimer Regarding Future Zoning Compliance**

The comments and recommendation included within this Zoning Staff Report have been provided to the City of Reading and Applicant based upon the information that was submitted by the Applicant with Conditional Use Application 2022-01.

**(10) Recommendations**

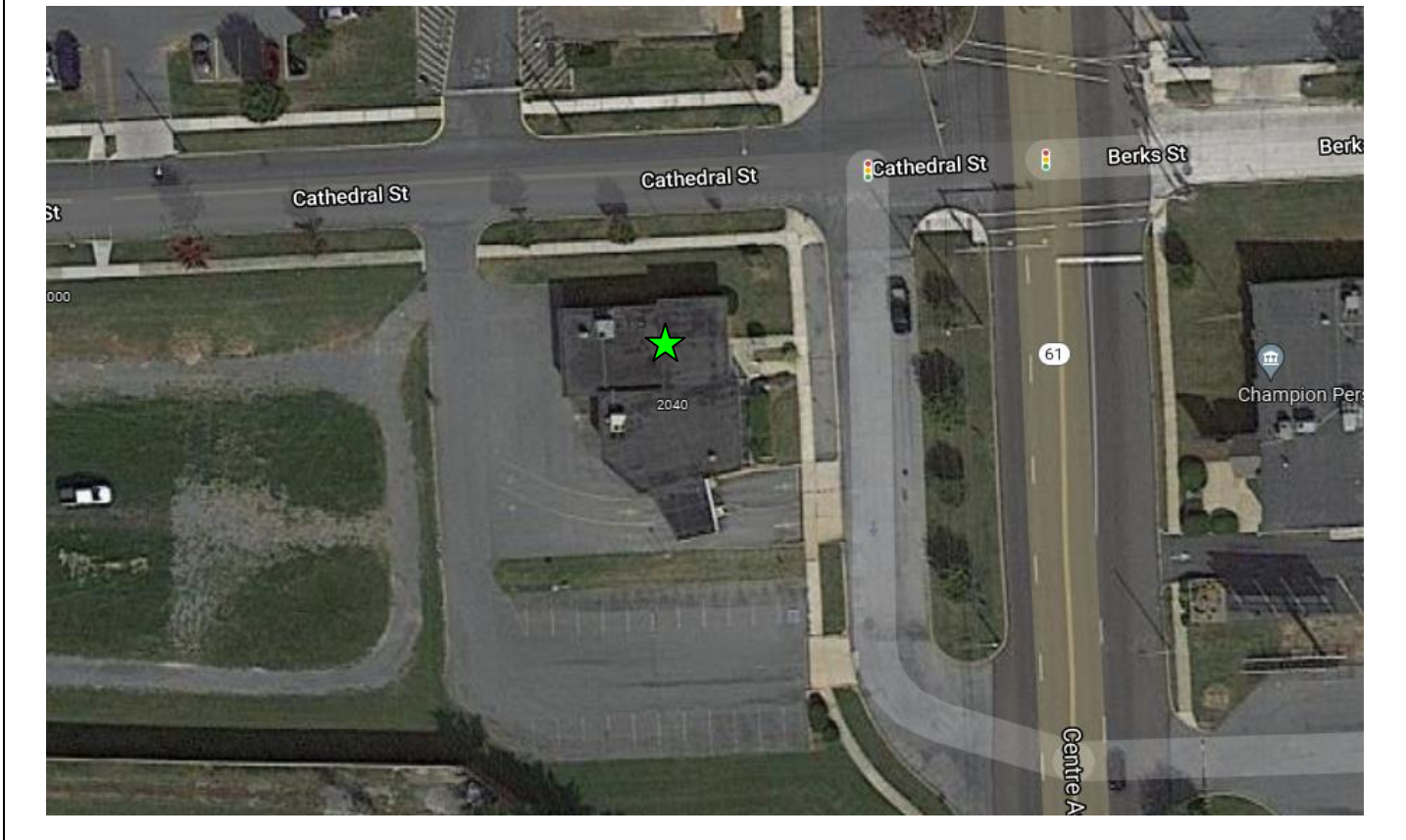
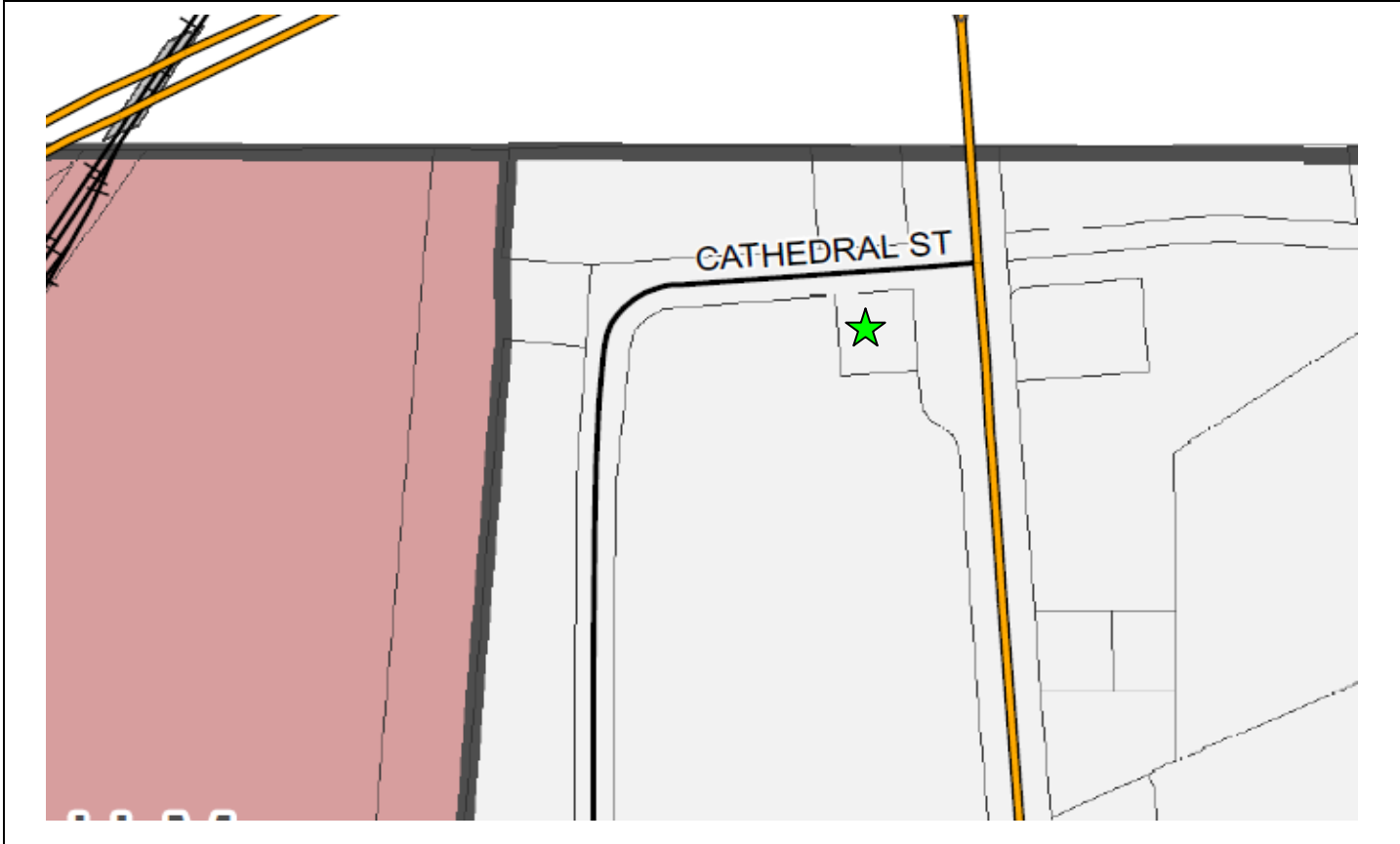
If Reading City Council determines that Conditional Use Application 2022-01 should be approved, the Planning Office and Zoning Office recommend that the following conditions be applied:

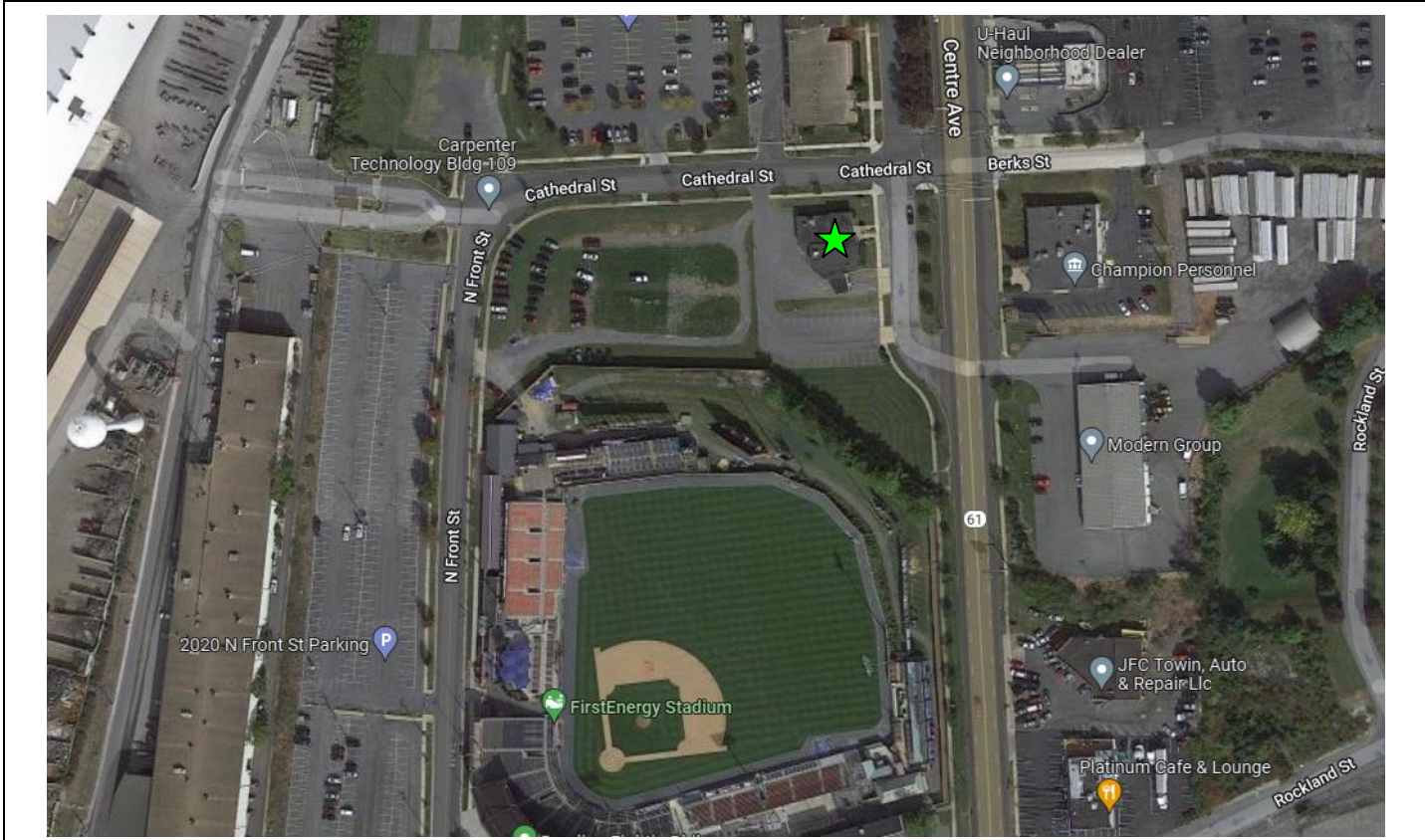
- (a) The Applicant shall comply with all pertinent provisions for a “banquet hall” or related use(s) as specified by the Zoning Ordinance or as determined by the Zoning Office.

- (b) A Minor Land Development Plan shall be prepared on behalf of the Applicant in order to address the provisions specified by City of Reading Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 600) and the City of Reading Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (Chapter 515).
- (c) Architectural plans, rendering and/or elevations shall be submitted with the Minor Land Development Plan in order to demonstrate compliance with building code requirements.
- (d) The Applicant shall coordinate efforts with the Planning Office and Zoning Office in order to verify if the nonconforming lot can be utilized considering the proposed use (banquet hall) and the proposed site improvements.
- (e) The Applicant shall demonstrate that the existing points of ingress and egress comply with the provisions specified by the City of Reading and/or the PA Department of Transportation.
- (f) The Applicant shall establish, reserve or acquire additional off-street parking spaces in a location that is within 300 feet of the Subject Property. The number of additional parking spaces shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Office and Zoning Office.
- (g) A loading space shall be designated on the Subject Property.
- (h) The Applicant shall consult with the City of Reading Department of Community Development Services, Department of Public Works and the Department of Fire and Rescue in order to coordinate existing engineering, planning and design issues with the adjacent landowners and/or tenants within this neighborhood.
- (i) If required by the Planning Commission, a Stormwater Management Plan should be submitted to the City of Reading in accordance with the provisions specified by the City of Reading, Berks County Conservation District and other agencies with jurisdiction.
- (j) All sanitary sewage disposal issues shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the City of Reading, including the reservation, permitting, installation and connection of the required sanitary sewage disposal improvements.
- (k) All water supply issues shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the City of Reading, including the reservation, permitting, installation and connection of the water supply improvements.
- (l) The Minor Land Development Plan should provide emphasis on: neighborhood revitalization; architectural enhancement; streetscape enhancements; vehicular and pedestrian site accessibility; curbs and sidewalks; driveways; off-street parking; stormwater management; sanitary sewage disposal; water supply; utilities; landscaping and street trees; solid waste disposal; and other supplemental requirements that may apply to the proposed use.
- (m) All proposed signs shall be located, designed, permitted and installed in accordance with the provisions specified by the City of Reading.
- (n) The appropriate zoning and building permits shall be prepared and submitted to address all building code requirements for the proposed "banquet hall".
- (o) The building shall comply with all fire, safety and accessibility requirements specified by the City of Reading prior to occupancy.
- (p) The Applicant shall provide all licenses that are required for the ownership and operation of a "banquet hall", as required by local and state requirements.

**(11) Site Pictures and Related Documents (refer to Pages 5 through 8 of this Report)**

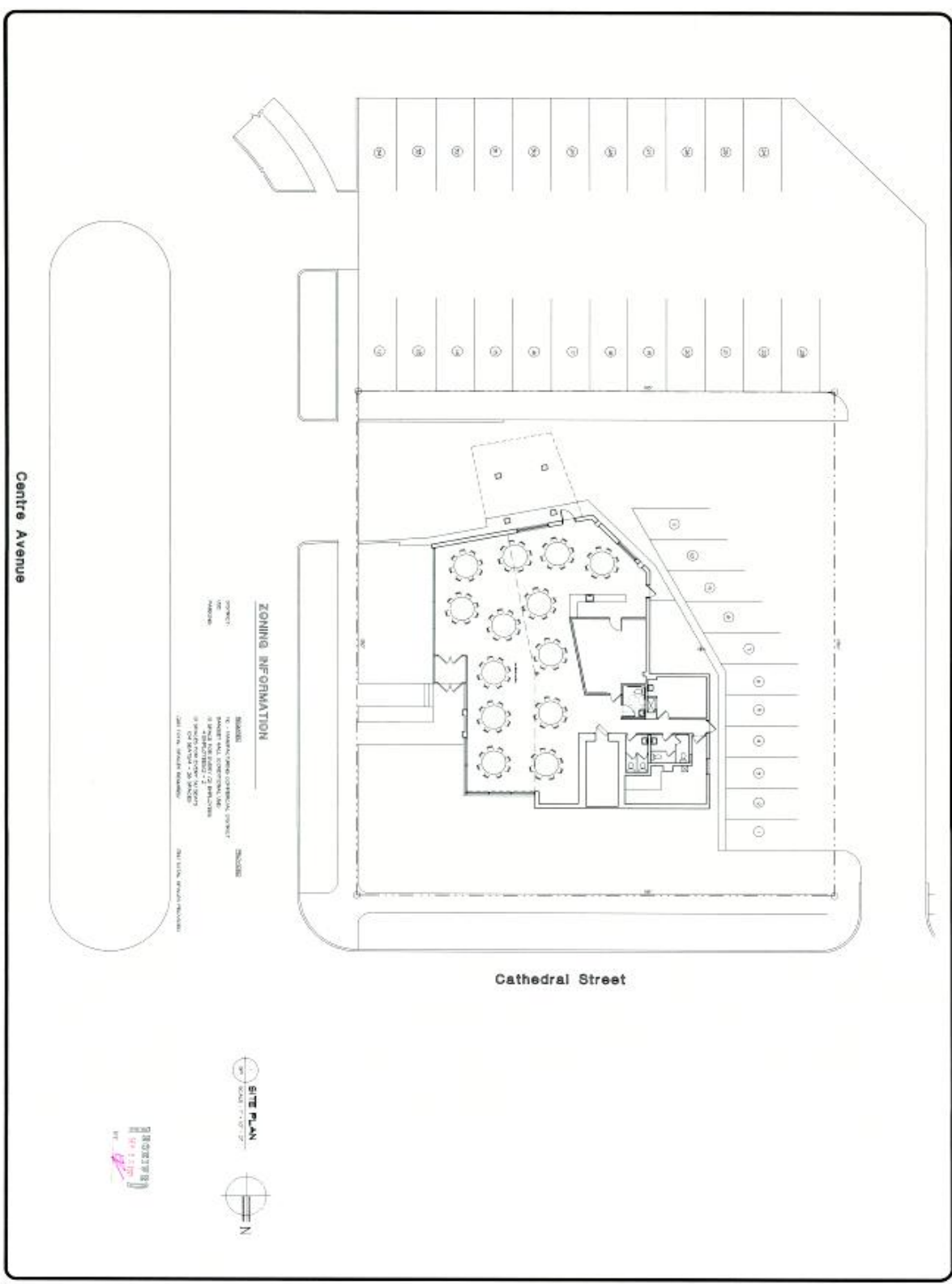












**ZONING INFORMATION**

PROJECT: Saldana Banquet Hall  
 ADDRESS: 2040 Centre Avenue  
 MAP: 15 5308 1961 1612  
 ZONING: R-1  
 SUBMITTED: 03/15/2022  
 PREPARED BY: STEPHEN J. GOUCK  
 DATE: 03/15/2022



<p>SP-1</p>	<p>Proposed:  <b>Saldana Banquet Hall</b>                  2040 Centre Ave                  Reading, PA</p>	<p><b>GOUCK ARCHITECTS</b>                  STEPHEN J. GOUCK                  REGISTERED ARCHITECT                  3501 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18103                  P: 610-855-1100 www.gouckarchitects.com</p>	<p>03/15/2022 09:00 AM 2022</p> <p>Preparation of records and copies thereof is digital and shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act of the United States and will be subject to the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act of the United States.</p> <p>FOR ALL SIGNED COPIES TO BE MADE OFFEROR SHALL SIGN AND VERIFY THE SIGNATURE OF ALL PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT. COPIES SHALL BE MADE OFFEROR SHALL SIGN AND VERIFY THE SIGNATURE OF ALL PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT. COPIES SHALL BE MADE OFFEROR SHALL SIGN AND VERIFY THE SIGNATURE OF ALL PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT.</p>	<p>DATE</p>
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