

**IN RE: APPEAL OF ADAM AND SARA : BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING
LINSENMAIER RELATIVE TO A : BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING,
PROPERTY LOCATED AT 627 ANGORA : PENNSYLVANIA
ROAD, CITY OF READING, BERKS :
COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA : APPEAL NO. 2502-0008
:
: VARIANCE, INTERPRETATION
: AND/OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION**

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

AND NOW, this 9th day of April, 2025, a hearing having been held on March 12, 2025, upon the application of Adam and Sara Linsenmaier, 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. Applicants are Adam and Sara Linsenmaier, adult individuals residing at 627 Angora Road, Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19606 (hereinafter referred to as the “Applicants”).
2. Applicants are the fee simple owners of the property located at 627 Angora Road, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania (hereinafter referred to as the “Subject Property”).
3. The Subject Property is located in the Preservation 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”).

4. Applicants are seeking a variance under Section 600-813 of the Zoning Ordinance to build a pole barn on the Subject Property that is not a permitted use; in the alternative, they are seeking a special exception or an appeal of the Zoning Administrator's determination.

5. The Subject Property consists of approximately 3.7 acres with a family dwelling unit and other accessory structures located thereon.

6. Applicants stated the dwelling unit was built in 1900 and has been used as a family dwelling unit ever since.

7. Applicants reside in the family dwelling unit on the Subject Property.

8. Applicants operate two businesses at the Subject Property, a small herb farm and a property maintenance business.

9. Applicants propose to construct a small 24' x 32' x 15' pole barn for more security for the storage of equipment and tools used in their businesses.

10. Applicants stated the pole barn would have a 4" concrete floor and the peak of the pole barn would be no more than 16'.

11. Pursuant to Section 600-813, "storage sheds" are a permitted accessory use in the Preservation District but the proposed pole barn exceeds the maximum permitted area (280 square feet).

12. The Subject Property already has existing 300 square feet of accessory structures, namely a greenhouse (80 sq. ft.), shed #1 (80 sq. ft.), shed #2 (40 sq. ft.) and shed #3 (120 sq. ft.).

13. Applicants stated the pole barn will be fairly secluded from both Angora Road and Engelman's Park which is below the Subject Property and will have a patina green roof and light gray clayish color siding so it will blend in well.

14. Applicants understand no one may reside in the pole barn.

15. Berks Nature had concerns due to the Subject Property's close proximity to the Gravity Trail and storm water runoff issues since the Gravity Trail sits below the Subject Property.

16. Applicants stated the Subject Property is located on a big hill and the property is constructed in large tiers for drainage.

17. Applicants stated the Subject Property is very secluded and they do not believe the pole barn will be visible from Angora Road or the Gravity Trail.

18. Applicants stated they will have a water collection system for their greenhouse and gardens.

19. Applicants stated they will plant some native species around the pole barn to buffer the view.

20. Applicants stated the pole barn will not alter the character of the neighborhood nor substantially or permanently affect the Subject Property.

21. Cathy Myers, a member of the Reading Environmental Advisory Council, shared the same concerns as were expressed to the Zoning Office by Berks Nature.

DISCUSSION

Applicants are seeking a variance under Section 600-813 of the Zoning Ordinance to build a pole barn on the Subject Property that is not a permitted use; in the alternative, they are seeking a special exception or an appeal of the Zoning Administrator's determination.

The Zoning Board finds that the proposed use is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and will not be a detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood as long as Applicants comply with all of the required conditions set forth herein.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Applicants are Adam and Sara Linsenmaier.
2. The Subject Property is located at 627 Angora Road, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19606.
3. The Subject Property is located in the Preservation Zoning District.
4. Applicants are seeking a variance under Section 600-813 of the Zoning Ordinance to build a pole barn on the Subject Property that is not a permitted use; in the alternative, they are seeking a special exception or an appeal of the Zoning Administrator's determination.
5. The Zoning Board incorporates the findings of fact as though fully set forth at length herein.
6. The Zoning Board is permitted to grant applications for variances and/or special exceptions and other relief as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.
7. In order to grant the relief, the Applicants must show they have satisfied the relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance.
8. After reviewing the Applicants' request in detail, the Zoning Hearing Board enters the following Decision:
 - a. Applicants are hereby granted relief to construct a pole barn at the Subject Property subject to the following conditions:
 - b. Applicants shall provide a buffer around the pole barn which must be approved by the Zoning Administrator.
 - c. Applicants shall provide a water collection system/retention system if required by the City Engineer.
 - d. If required by the Zoning Administrator, Applicant shall submit a Minor Land Development Plan.

e. The pole barn shall only be used for the storage of equipment and tools and shall not be used for any commercial purpose like a welding school without coming before the Zoning Board for additional relief.

f. Applicants shall comply with all relevant building and occupancy codes and ordinances as well as the plans and testimony submitted before the Zoning Board.

g. Applicants may not use, expand, alter or otherwise use the Subject Property inconsistently with the contents of this Decision without making application requesting further relief from the Zoning Board.

h. Failure to comply with any of these above-referenced conditions shall mean the immediate revocation of the relief granted herein.

The decision of this Board is by a vote of 5 to 0 .

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

/s/ Philip Rabena

PHILIP RABENA, CHAIRMAN

/s/ Thomas Fox

THOMAS FOX

/s/ Jeffrey Gattone

JEFFREY GATTONE

/s/ Jared Barcz

JARED BARCZ

/s/ Charles Jones

CHARLES JONES