

**IN RE: APPEAL OF WALNUT STREET
HOLDINGS 2025, LLC, RELATIVE TO A
PROPERTY LOCATED AT 150 N. FIFTH
STREET, CITY OF READING, BERKS
COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA** : **BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING
BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING,
PENNSYLVANIA**
: **APPEAL NO. 2601-0001**
:
: **VARIANCE, INTERPRETATION
AND/OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION**

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

AND NOW, this 11th day of March, 2026, a hearing having been held on February 11, 2026, upon the application of Walnut Street Holdings 2025, 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 Walnut Street Holdings 2025, LLC, a Pennsylvania limited liability company, with a registered address of 50 N. Fifth Street, Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania (hereinafter referred to as the “Applicant”).
2. Applicant is the fee simple owner of the real property located 150 N. Fifth Street, City of Reading Berks County, Pennsylvania (hereinafter referred to as “Subject Property”).
3. The Subject Property is located in the C-C Commercial Core 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. Applicant was represented by Keith Mooney, Esquire, of Barley Snyder, 2755 Century Boulevard, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania 19610.
5. Applicant is requesting special exception approval to adaptively reuse the second and third floors of the existing building located on the Subject Property into eight residential dwelling units

pursuant to Section 600-1202 of the Zoning Ordinance. In addition, Applicant is seeking a variance for minimum habitable area with regard to the proposed two one-bedroom apartment units. Applicant is also seeking to appeal the Zoning Administrator's determination and any other relief required to use the space for the proposed uses.

6. Applicant purchased the Subject Property on February 6, 2026.

7. The first floor of the Subject Property was previously used for a commercial use and is currently vacant.

8. Applicant is proposing four commercial units on the first floor/mezzanine areas of the Subject Property which meet the commercial space square footage requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

9. Applicant is proposing eight residential apartment units on the second and third floors as follows:

a. Second floor: one one-bedroom unit, two two-bedroom units and one studio unit.

b. Third floor: two two-bedroom units, one one-bedroom unit and one studio unit.

10. The two one-bedroom units require relief in the amount of three square feet per unit as a result of the internal structural makeup of the building which is less than one percent of each of the units.

11. The Zoning Ordinance provides that a reduction of up to ten percent in the habitable area may be considered to accommodate for the design of an existing building.

12. One and a half parking spaces are required per dwelling unit for a minimum total of twelve off-street parking spaces for this project, which must be within a 300-foot maximum distance.

13. Applicant has proposed twelve parking spaces at 147 N. Fifth Street which is within 300 feet of the Subject Property.

14. Testimony was presented that the proposed adaptive reuse:

a. Is consistent with the City of Reading Comprehensive Plan;

b. Is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies established within the Zoning Ordinance;

c. Will not substantially increase traffic and congestion nor will it create any undo

concentration of population;

- d. Will not impair or create a significant threat to the public health and safety;
- e. Will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties; and
- f. Is not detrimental to the appropriate use of adjacent property and will not

generate significant nuisances or hazards.

- 15. There were no objections to the requested relief.

DISCUSSION

Applicant is requesting special exception approval to adaptively reuse the second and third floors of the existing building located on the Subject Property into eight residential dwelling units pursuant to Section 600-1202 of the Zoning Ordinance. In addition, Applicant is seeking a variance for minimum habitable area with regard to the proposed two one-bedroom apartment units. Applicant is also seeking to appeal the Zoning Administrator's determination and any other relief required to use the space for the proposed uses.

The Board finds the proposed use will not be a detriment to the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood and is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Ordinance as long as Applicant complies with the conditions set forth below.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

- 1. Applicant is Walnut Street Holdings 2025, LLC.
- 2. The Subject Property is located at 150 N. Fifth Street, Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19601.
- 3. The Subject Property is located in the C-C Zoning District.
- 4. The specific sections of the Zoning Ordinance appealed are Sections 600-1202 (adaptive reuse).
- 5. The Zoning Board is permitted to provide interpretation and grant applications for variances, special exceptions and adaptive reuse as set forth in the relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

6. The Zoning Board incorporates the findings of fact as though fully set forth at length herein.

7. In order to grant the requested relief, Applicant must show it has satisfied the relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

8. After reviewing the Applicant's request in detail, the Zoning Hearing Board enters the following Decision:

- a. Applicant is granted the requested special exception and variance.
- b. Applicant shall submit a formal parking agreement for the twelve parking spaces at 147 N. Fifth Street, Reading, Pennsylvania.
- c. Applicant shall comply with all pertinent provisions for Adaptive Reuse considering the Residential Apartment Uses, as prescribed by the Zoning Ordinance.
- d. A Minor Land Development Plan, if necessary, shall be submitted and approved by the Planning Commission.
- e. 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 prior to occupancy.
- f. All water supply issues shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the City of Reading, including the reservation, permitting, installation and connection of the required water supply improvements prior to occupancy.
- g. Façade drawings, if necessary, shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator for approval.
- h. All proposed signs shall be located, designed, permitted and installed in accordance with the provisions specified by the City of Reading.
- i. The appropriate building and zoning permits shall be prepared and submitted to address all building code requirements for the proposed residential apartment units.
- j. The building shall comply with all fire, safety and accessibility requirements

specified by the City of Reading prior to occupancy.

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

l. Applicant 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.

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

The decision of this Board is by a vote of 4 to 0 .

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

/s/ Jared Barcz

JARED BARCZ, CHAIRMAN

/s/ Philip Rabena

PHILIP RABENA

/s/ Thomas Fox

THOMAS FOX

/s/ Jeffrey Gattone

JEFFREY GATTONE

Recused

CHARLES JONES