

IN RE: APPEAL OF JIAN QIONG WU RELATIVE TO A PROPERTY LOCATED AT 520 WASHINGTON STREET, CITY OF READING, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA	: BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING : BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING, : PENNSYLVANIA : : APPEAL NO. 2409-0027 : : VARIANCE, INTERPRETATION : AND/OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION
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**DECISION OF THE ZONING HEARING
BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING**

AND NOW, this 13th day of November, 2024, a hearing having been held on October 9, 2024, upon the application of Jian Qiong Wu, 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 Jian Qiong Wu, an adult individual with a mailing address of 1444 Church Street, Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19601 (hereinafter referred to as the “Applicant”).
2. Applicant has an equitable interest in the property located at 520 Washington Street, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania (hereinafter referred to as the “Subject Property”).
3. The fee simple owner of the Subject Property, Enki Holdings, LLC, has granted Applicant permission to seek the requested relief.
4. The Subject Property is located in the Core Commercial (CC) 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 by Alex Goldberg, Esquire, of Nochumson, P.C., 1 S. Broad Street, Suite 1000, Philadelphia, PA 19107.
6. Applicant is seeking a variance to convert an existing office building into five (5)

dwelling units, a variance for the required minimum floor area for the dwelling units, and a variance for the required off-street parking spaces under Sections 600-807, 600-1101 and 600-1603 of the Zoning Ordinance.

7. Applicant proposes a complete renovation of the interior of the existing building structure as well as cosmetic improvements to the interior.

8. Applicant states the Subject Property will not include a street level business; and, therefore, a variance is required under Section 807.B(4)(e).

9. Applicant proposes four (4) two-bedroom units and a studio unit at the Subject Property.

10. The provisions for adaptive reuse under Section 600-1202 requires that all units meet the minimum required habitable area as listed in Section 600-1101.D. of the Zoning Ordinance. The Section also requires a separate special exception for the proposed studio apartment.

11. The square footage of the two (2) two-bedroom units proposed on the second floor fall under the 700 square foot requirement with the rear facing unit being 678 square feet and the front facing unit being 604 square feet.

12. The square footage of the other two (2) two-bedroom units meet the 700 square foot requirement.

13. The square footage of the proposed studio unit measures 463 square feet and meets the 400 square foot studio requirement.

14. The basement will be used for utilities, tenant storage and shared laundry.

15. There is no off-street or on-street parking at the Subject Property.

16. Applicant states the location of the Subject Property makes it impossible to comply with the 300 foot boundary parking requirement.

17. Applicant submitted a fully executed parking services agreement with the Reading Parking Authority for the leasing of eight (8) parking spaces at the parking lot located at 700 Washington Street for the tenants of the Subject Property which is approximately over 793 feet away from the Subject Property.

18. Section 600-1603 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that off-street parking spaces shall be within 300 feet walking distance from the entrance of the principal use being served.

19. Applicant states the Subject Property will be professionally managed and there will be security cameras wired in the common hallway in the front and at the front door.

20. Applicant states the granting of the relief will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood as it already contains a mixture of residential and nonresidential uses.

21. There were no objections to the requested relief.

DISCUSSION

Applicant is seeking a variance to convert an existing office building into five (5) dwelling units, a variance for the required minimum floor area for the dwelling units, and a variance for the required off-street parking spaces under Sections 600-807, 600-1101 and 600-1603 of the Zoning Ordinance. 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 zoning district or the neighborhood in general.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Applicant is Jian Qiong Wu.
2. The Subject Property is located at 520 Washington Street, Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania.
3. The Subject Property is located in the CC Zoning District.
4. The Zoning Board is permitted to provide interpretation and grant applications for variances and special exceptions as set forth in the relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance.
5. The Zoning Board incorporates the findings of fact as though fully set forth at length herein.
6. In order to grant the requested relief, the Applicant must show he has satisfied the relevant sections of the Zoning Ordinance.
7. After reviewing the Applicant's request in detail, the Zoning Hearing Board enters the following Decision:

- a. Applicant is granted relief for the proposed five (5) dwelling units at the Subject Property.
- b. Applicant is granted relief for the proposed off-street parking spaces.
- c. Applicant shall comply with all pertinent provisions for Adaptive Reuse considering the Residential Apartment Uses, as prescribed by the Zoning Ordinance.
- d. A Preliminary Land Development Plan, if necessary, shall be prepared to address the provisions required by the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (Chapter 515 of the City of Reading Code).
- e. A Final Land Development Plan, if necessary, shall be prepared for approval by the City of Reading and recorded with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- 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/ Philip Rabena

PHILIP RABENA, CHAIRMAN

/s/ Jeffrey Gattone

JEFFREY GATTONE

/s/ Jared Barcz

JARED BARCZ

/s/ Charles Jones

CHARLES JONES