

IN RE: APPEAL OF CITY OF READING RELATIVE TO A PROPERTY LOCATED AT 509 N. SIXTH STREET, CITY OF READING, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA	: BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING : BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING, : PENNSYLVANIA : : APPEAL NO. 2512-0042 : : VARIANCE, INTERPRETATION : AND/OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION
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**DECISION OF THE ZONING HEARING
BOARD OF THE CITY OF READING**

AND NOW, this 8th day of April, 2026, hearings having been held on January 14, 2026, February 11, 2026, and March 11, 2026, upon the application of the City of Reading, 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 the City of Reading with a mailing address of 815 Washington Street, Reading, Pennsylvania 19601 (hereinafter referred to as the “Applicant”).
2. Applicant has an interest in the real property located at 509 N. Sixth Street, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania (hereinafter referred to as the “Subject Property”).
3. The fee simple owner of the Subject Property, the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Reading, has granted Applicant permission to seek the requested relief.
4. The Subject Property is located in the M-C Manufacturing Commercial Zoning District as that term and district are defined by the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Reading, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the “Zoning Ordinance”).
5. Applicant is seeking a variance from the minimum rear and side yard setback requirements to install a solar canopy/carport in the parking lot at the Subject Property, as well as a

variance from the requirement that the solar canopy/carport be set back from all public roads a distance of not less than 1.1 times the alternative energy system's height.

6. The parking lot on the Subject Property is used by the Department of Public Works.

7. The project is part of the City's partnership with Schneider Electric under the Guaranteed Energy Savings Act (GESA) in an effort to transition to 100% renewable energy by 2050.

8. The granting of the variance would allow for multiple canopies to be installed over existing parking areas and the electrical output would power the Department of Public Works, would allow for conformance with the Interconnection Agreement between the City and Met-Ed, and would provide protected parking for City of Reading vehicles.

9. Pursuant to Section 600-811.A. of the Zoning Ordinance, the minimum required rear yard setback in the M-C Zoning District is 20 feet and Applicant is proposing a rear setback between approximately 4 feet and 10 feet.

10. Pursuant to Section 600-811.A. of the Zoning Ordinance, the minimum required side yard setback in the M-C Zoning District is 10 feet and one of the proposed canopies is located approximately 5 feet from the side yard.

11. Applicant is in compliance with the front yard set back requirement under Section 600-811.A of the Zoning Ordinance.

12. The top height of the solar canopy would be approximately 20 feet with a minimum clearance of 14 feet which will ensure that all of the Public Works' and fire vehicles can get under the canopy as needed.

13. Applicant stated the requested relief will not affect the health, safety or welfare of the neighboring property owners.

14. Applicant stated it will benefit the City of Reading and its citizens by providing electricity, saving on snow removal and moving cars around in snowstorms, and protecting municipal vehicles from potential hail and other weather conditions.

15. There were no objections to the requested relief.

DISCUSSION

Applicant is seeking a variance from the minimum rear and side yard setback requirements to install a solar canopy/carport in the parking lot at the Subject Property, as well as a variance from the requirement that the solar canopy/carport be set back from all public roads a distance of not less than 1.1 times the alternative energy system's height.

The Zoning Board finds the proposed use is in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Zoning Ordinance and will not be detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood or the zoning district.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Applicant is the City of Reading.
2. The Subject Property is located at 509 N. Sixth Street, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19601.
3. The Subject Property is located in the M-C Zoning District.
4. Applicant is seeking a variance from the minimum rear and side yard setback requirements to install a solar canopy/carport in the parking lot at the Subject Property, as well as a variance from the requirement that the solar canopy/carport be set back from all public roads a distance of not less than 1.1 times the alternative energy system's height.
5. The Zoning Board incorporates the findings of fact as though fully set forth at length herein.
6. In order to grant the requested variance, Applicant must show it 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 the requested relief as long as it complies with the conditions hereinafter set forth.

b. If required by the Planning Commission, a Minor Land Development Plan and Annexation Plan must be submitted for approval and filed with the Berks County Recorder of Deeds within twelve (12) months of completion of the project.

c. Applicant shall apply for any required building trades, fire permits and submit to appropriate inspections deemed necessary.

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

e. 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.

f. 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/ Jared Barcz

JARED BARCZ, CHAIRMAN

/s/ Philip Rabena

PHILIP RABENA

/s/ Thomas Fox

THOMAS FOX

/s/ Jeffrey Gattone

JEFFREY GATTONE

/s/ Charles Jones

CHARLES JONES