This Public Hearing is filmed and can be viewed LIVE while the hearing is taking place or at your convenience any time after the hearing on the City’s website at www.ReadingPa.gov, under “Live and Archived Meeting Videos”. All electronic recording devices must be located behind the podium area in Council Chambers and located at the entry door in all other meeting rooms and offices, as per Bill No. 27-2012.

RULES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT COUNCIL MEETINGS
The Administrative Code, Section § 5-209 defines public participation at Council meetings.

1. Citizens attending Council meetings are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and respectful manner that does not disrupt the meeting.

2. Those wishing to have conversations should do so in the hall outside Council Chambers in a low speaking voice.

3. Public comment will occur only during the Public Comment period listed on the agenda at the podium and must be directed to Council as a body and not to any individual Council member or public or elected official in attendance. Clapping, calling out, and/or cheering when a speaker finishes his comments is not permitted.

4. Citizens may not approach the Council tables at any time during the meeting.

5. Any person making threats of any type, personally offensive or impertinent remarks or any person becoming unruly while addressing Council may be called to order by the Presiding Officer and may be barred from speaking, removed from Council Chambers and/or cited.

6. Failure to abide by these regulations could result in your removal from Council Chambers and/or a citation. These regulations are meant to avoid disruptions at the meeting and they are not meant to interfere with public participation.
I. Call to Order & Purpose

The purpose of this hearing is to obtain public comment on the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, specifically amending the Zoning Ordinance Section by creating a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zoning District located within certain portions of the City in Manufacturing Commercial (M-C), R-3 Residential, And Commercial Neighborhood (C-N) zoning districts and amending Section 600-815 Districts by amending the requirements for a Riverfront Redevelopment (RR) Overlay Zone and the Zoning Map. Advertised May 15 & 24, Public Hearing Scheduled for June 5th at 5 pm in Council Chambers.

1. OPENING MATTERS

A. CALL TO ORDER

2. AMENDMENT HIGHLIGHTS – expected date of enactment is July 10, 2017

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizens have the opportunity to address the Council, by registering with the City Clerk by 5 pm on the day of the scheduled Council hearing or by legibly printing their name, address and the subject matter to be discussed on a sign-up sheet found on the podium in Council Chambers between 5 pm and 7 pm on the day of the scheduled hearing. All remarks must be directed to Council as a body and not to any individual Council member or public or elected official in attendance. Any person making personally offensive or impertinent remarks or any person becoming unruly while addressing Council may be called to order by the Presiding Officer and may be barred from speaking before Council, unless permission to continue speaking is granted by the majority vote of Council.

All comments by the public shall be made from the speaker’s podium. Citizens attending the hearing may not cross into the area beyond the podium. Any materials to be distributed to Council must be given to the City Clerk before the hearing is called to order.

Those commenting shall be provided with three (3) minutes to address the body of Council. Additional time may be granted by the body of Council. No comments shall be made from any other location except the podium, and anyone making “out of order” comments may be subject to removal. There will be no demonstration, including applause or cheering, at the conclusion of anyone’s remarks. Citizens may not ask questions of Council members or other elected or public officials in attendance.

4. ADJOURN
Report on the Proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone for Northwest Reading

Prepared by Aaron Booth, AIA

May 03, 2017

Summary

In the draft City of Reading Comprehensive Plan compiled in 2015, a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone is proposed for the area of Northwest Reading currently designated a M-C Manufacturing Commercial Zoning District. This area includes the 49.17-acre parcel known as 1 Berkshire Place, which has been vacant since construction was halted on the Berkshire Bottling Works plant in December 2007. The site and its context are characterized by several inherent qualities:

1. Riverfront: Development along the river should promote uses that depend upon adjacency to the river rather than non-dependent uses, enhance the public’s access and enjoyment of the water’s edge, and protect natural resources.

2. Parkfront: The greenway corridor can develop into pedestrian-friendly public plazas, esplanades, and outdoor recreation that enrich neighborhoods and attract future development and visitors.

3. Above the Floodplain: Vacant land is elevated above the 100-year & 500-year floodplains, inviting flood-resistant development and offering outstanding views.

4. Large Scale: The scale of undeveloped land area is large enough to support a broad new urban district complete with the various commercial, residential, and recreational functions necessary to work, live, and play all within walking distance.

Rather than restricting the manufacturing and commercial uses currently permitted within the M-C Zoning District, the proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone would permit additional commercial, residential, and recreational possibilities for mixed-use development.

Given the success that many US cities have achieved in transforming their postindustrial waterfronts into vibrant mixed-use urban amenities for residents and visitors, it is in the City’s interest to explore the opportunity for 1 Berkshire Place to be remediated and transformed into a community of viable businesses and residences. The intrinsic characteristics of the site and its context, which already contain an existing residential historic district, greenspace, elementary school, arts center, and community center, make this area much more conducive to mixed-use development of walkable streetscapes rather than a large-scale industrial facility with fenced perimeters. Beyond the undesirable byproducts of intensive manufacturing, such as shipping traffic, noise, pollution, blocked access to the riverfront, safety/security concerns, visual impacts, etc., data indicates that mixed-use development is a higher and better use, potentially increasing significantly increased leaseable floor area and employment opportunities, resulting in higher tax revenue and economic growth over time.

This report briefly examines key considerations of a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone, including mixed-use development and its employment potential, attracting new business investment, trends of deindustrialization and suburbanization, other sites for industrial development, the Keystone Opportunity Zone, roadway and access improvements, small-scale manufacturing and mixed-uses, and brownfield soil remediation. Based on these considerations, a 130.56 acre Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone is anticipated to expand development opportunities for 1 Berkshire Place as well as underutilized parcels within portions of the neighboring Queen Anne Historic District in the Northwest section of the City of Reading.
Mixed-Use and Employment Potential

The RiverPlace Master Plan prepared by Sasaki Associates in 2005 was reviewed to analyze the employment-producing potential of Riverplace Place. Based on the basic site layout indicated in the Master Plan, it is estimated that the site can support a development of several mixed-use buildings, which combine multiple occupancy types into a single structure. Within this arrangement of buildings, the total floor area may potentially include approximately 840,000 sf of commercial use on the 1st and 2nd Floors (retail, restaurants, services), 840,000 sf of office use on the 3rd and 4th Floors (business, technology-based research labs, medical), and up to 3,100,000 sf of residential use (a variety of market rate high rise apartments, condominiums, and low rise townhouses). A development of this typology is equates to a total gross building area of approximately 4,800,000 sf.

"Along the riverfront, a positive identity should be built on the competitive advantage of desirable, prime riverfront land and proximity to downtown and neighborhoods. This approach recognizes that many areas along the riverfront, such as the Dana Yards and the Wyomissing Creek area, are quite different from suburban locations that have large parcels and better highway access. Because of the proximity of existing and future residential neighborhoods, business investment along the riverfront must be compatible with these uses." - Sasaki Associates
The US Green Building Council, the organization that administers the LEED certification program for sustainable building design and development, prescribes the number of square feet of gross floor area assignable to each employee for various building uses. Applying these figures, it is estimated that a mixed-use development at 1 Berkshire Place could potentially sustain up to 4,779 employees (see table below). By contrast, industrial uses may be estimated to support up to 500-1,250 employees.

**New Business Investment**

Based on the proposed mixture of uses at 1 Berkshire Place, business occupancy constitutes 55% of the total building area. The employment-producing potential of business uses warrants consideration of an amendment to the existing Zoning Ordinance to increase the minimum business use within the Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone from 5% to 35%. The Overlay Zone is intended to attract new business investment, as well as residential investment, and mixed-use development is an effective redevelopment strategy for that purpose.

Given that the mixture of uses supports a variety of employment categories, the median annual income is used to estimate that mixed-use development could potentially generate over $6 million in annual county earned income tax revenue after the expiration of existing Keystone Opportunity Zone tax abatements. With a total construction value based on floor area estimated to be approximately $1.17 billion, the proposed development could potentially generate over $20 million in city real estate tax revenue after the expiration of tax incentives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT &amp; TAX REVENUE ESTIMATE FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT - 1 BERKSHIRE PLACE</th>
<th>Post-KOZ Potential</th>
<th>Post-KOZ Potential</th>
<th>Post-KOZ Potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employee Median Income Tax</td>
<td>County Revenue</td>
<td>Value of Construction Real Estate Tax Revenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Floor Area</td>
<td>% of Total Floor Area</td>
<td>Total Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th - 12th Floors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3,060,000</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th &amp; 4th Floors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Office</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>570,000</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Office</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>190,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational, daycare</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;D or Laboratory</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st &amp; 2nd Floors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail, general</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service (e.g., financial)</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>320,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery store</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Rise Residential</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4,210,000</td>
<td>4,779</td>
<td>6,214,621</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Source: USGBC LEED BD+C New Construction v4, Appendix 2, Default Occupancy Curve
2 Floor area represents an estimated projection based on StreetPlace Master Plan by Sasaki Associates in 2005
Deindustrialization and Suburbanization

"During the 19th century, the United States became the world's dominant industrial power. The process by which the country was transformed from an agrarian to an industrial nation began in a host of small cities in the northeastern United States. Even after the growth of large manufacturing centers like Detroit and Pittsburgh, many smaller cities continued to hold their own as manufacturing centers well into the 20th century. In Delaware, southern New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania, many colonial towns were transformed into industrial cities during the 19th century... As with many such cities around the United States, all of these cities lost much or most of their industrial base after the end of the Second World War and have struggled both to find a new postindustrial identity and to identify new 21st century economic drivers to replace their lost manufacturing plants. While some cities have had some success, with Bethlehem and Lancaster becoming tourist destinations and Wilmington a center for banking and finance, they all face daunting economic, social, and physical challenges. Many have lost a significant part of the population they once had, which in most of these cities reached its peak at some point between 1920 and 1950. As many of their middle class residents have departed for the suburbs, and much of their younger generation for other parts of the nation, these cities have come to contain growing numbers of poor residents, many with limited attachment to the workforce."

"All of these cities followed largely similar trajectories for much of their history, sharing a common course of late 19th and early 20th century growth spurred by industrialization, and then decline after 1950 triggered by a combination of suburbanization and the loss of most of each city's manufacturing base."

"As the forces of suburbanization and deindustrialization began to affect the Third District's small manufacturing cities in the 1950s, these cities found themselves confronting a series of challenges posed by these forces, including demographic changes resulting in a smaller and poorer population; the loss of major manufacturing establishments; a declining role as the central retail district in the region; and falling property values and investment in the city's building stock."

Reading's manufacturing sector declined 64% between 1954 and 2007, and it is continuing to decline.15 While the suburban and rural parts of Berks County have experienced service sector growth and a real estate boom, the City of Reading has largely experienced the job and income loss related to the decline of manufacturing in the US.14 Although the manufacturing sector remains a significant employer in Reading, continuing economic distress is evidence that the persistence of manufacturing does not translate to economic success.13

"While a strong manufacturing base is a valuable present asset, in that it may provide the city with tax revenues and a pool of relatively well-paying jobs for workers with limited formal education, its significance for the future of these cities is more uncertain. No city can reasonably assume that its manufacturing base is stable or likely to grow on its own and, thus, avoid the hard work of finding new economic engines. It is more likely that manufacturing will decline in the future rather than grow, and that the successful cities of the future will have diversified their economies significantly in other directions."

Beyond 1 Berksline Place, a wide range of existing land uses within the proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone area already present opportunities for diversified economic growth, including residential, retail, business, and light industrial. The Overlay Zone is intended to promote a variety of new uses that are complimentary to these existing business and residences, offering a diverse range of private investment and employment opportunities for residents. Just as no city can thrive if it fails to build the middle class, no city can thrive in today's economic world unless it can draw significant private-sector investment.17

Reading has many underutilized assets that can catalyze growth in employment sectors other than manufacturing. Its rich history, its compact and walkable spatial pattern, its distinctive architecture, and its parks and riverfronts all represent valuable resources that can draw new, dynamic populations and trigger future economic activity.19
Manufacturing Sector Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment</th>
<th>Establishments</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
<th>Total Employment</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
<th>Average Jobs / Establishment</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allentown</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
<td>292,962</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allentown</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
<td>292,962</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethlehem</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>27,526</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berwick</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>39,404</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
<td>11,624</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hagerstown</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
<td>16,194</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancaster</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>24,514</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 13 Cities</td>
<td>2,736</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>262,520</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Alan Mallach, In Philadelphia's Shadow: Small Cities in the Third Federal Reserve District

Manufacturing Earnings Over Time

Note that US industry data changed classification systems between the years 2000 and 2001. This results in a break in the data series shown, as manufacturing is treated in a slightly different way between the 1969-2000 period and 2001-2012 periods.

Antonio Callari et. al., Reading Economic Report
Sites for Industrial Development

In 2000, 530 acres (or 8.3%) of the City's 6,394 acres of land area was occupied by industrial use. Since that time, several industrial sites that were once active are now vacant or underutilized, increasing the amount of developable land area (e.g., over 25 acres at the former Dana Corporation site near Wayne and West Perry Streets). Considering only the east bank of the Schuylkill River, there are currently over 83 acres of undeveloped, formerly-industrial, riverfront land area, most of which is located within the existing M-C Manufacturing Commercial or H-M Heavy Manufacturing zoning districts. These sites for industrial development constitute over 14% of the total riverfront land area located within 1,000 feet of the east bank of the Schuylkill River within Reading. Many of these sites, formerly owned by pillars of Reading's manufacturing history, have been vacant for over a decade. While it is important to accommodate new industrial development, the lack of demand requires policy consideration. Additionally, other underutilized parcels outside the City's riverfront area are more conducive to non-water-dependent industrial redevelopment (e.g., the 12.5 acre former Glikden site, the 109.5 acre Norfolk Southern Railroad Yard).
It is not the lack of available industrial land that has led to Reading's deindustrialization. Rather this is part of a national trend of deindustrialization that has been affecting cities in the United States since the mid-twentieth century.

Small-Scale Manufacturing and Mixed-Use

"Unlike the days when large companies dominated the nation's commodity production, today's manufacturing landscape is largely occupied by decentralized networks of small, specialized firms — many of which are hidden in plain sight in America's urban areas." 28

The existing M-C Manufacturing Commercial zoning designation in the proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone already allows many of the business types and amenities considered in the analysis of potential mixed-use development for 1 Berkshire Place. Uses permitted by right within the M-C District include offices and medical laboratories, restaurants, retail and wholesale sales and services, recreation facilities, financial institutions, exercise clubs, public parks, and nonmotorized recreation trails. However, does it not permit residential use.

Small-scale manufacturing businesses, those requiring 5,000 sq ft or less, can be compatible with mixed-use development and can provide work opportunities for residents within walking distance. This includes innovation-based operations (e.g., laser-cutting or 3D printing fabrications). While immediate adjacency between intensive manufacturing and housing within the same building is undesirable, small-scale manufacturing can certainly coexist within several hundred feet of residential uses on a site as large as 49.17 acres at 1 Berkshire Place.

"Small innovative companies involved in research and technology and light manufacturing of high value products will have minimal trucking requirements and may feature studios and live/work units." 28

The Zoning Ordinance allows "the option of developing property under the RR District or under the underlying district," but not both. 29 The changing scale and typology of manufacturing may merit reconsideration of restrictions on mixed small-scale manufacturing and residential uses. 29

Keystone Opportunity Zone

Areas within the proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone occupy an existing Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ). The KOZ remains in effect until 2023 and would not be precluded by assignment of a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone in this area.

The tax benefits afforded by the KOZ program are not only intended for businesses. The program also grants abatements to residents located within the designated zone. Ordinances authorizing exceptions, deductions, abatements, and credits within the KOZ are explicitly intended to "stimulate industrial, commercial, and residential improvements." KOZs have been effective in stimulating numerous mixed-use commercial and residential developments throughout Pennsylvania. 28

Since 1 Berkshire Place was designated as a KOZ site, new development has not been realized on the parcel. Although KOZ's have been effective elsewhere in stimulating initial development investment, one drawback is that tax incentives at 1 Berkshire Place could defer over $20 million per year in City real estate taxes alone based on the analysis of potential mixed-use development on the site (refer to table on p. 4).

Provided that mixed-use new development does not contain a high percentage of low-income subsidized housing or non-profit uses, the new tax revenue generated after the expiration of the KOZ should strengthen the economic status of the City of Reading as intended and sustain the Reading School District's ability to facilitate...
future changes in its student population. The proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone would not limit RSD ability to expand Northwest Elementary School, which is the facility that would be most directly impacted by population increases within the proposed Overlay Zone.

**Brownfield Soil Remediation**

In November 2002, a Baseline Environmental Report for 1 Berkshire Place was filed by the Greater Berks Development Fund (GBDF) and approved by PADEP. This document identified contaminants discovered through soils investigation and recommendations for remediation. GBDF completed the recommended remediation to develop the site for light industrial and commercial uses.

Although environmental regulations require a higher level of remediation for residential development, it is technically feasible to complete the additional remediation necessary to develop the site for mixed-use commercial, office, and residential use.

""Of the 122 soil samples collected and analyzed, 30 exceed a residential cleanup standard. While remediation will be required to address these impacts, it will only be required in the residential areas, and if the grading plan allows, much of not all of this material could be consolided into open space or onto commercial areas. So there will have to be additional soil management costs as part of development, but compared to transportation and disposal off-site, these costs are relatively minimal. Based on the assumption that materials can be managed on-site as part of redevelopment, I don't see that the environmental impacts at the site would make such a redevelopment proposal financially feasible.""  
Jim Cinti, PE, Liberty Environmental, Inc.

Strategies available to manage remediated soils on-site can help to make environmental cleanup for residential development financially achievable, and the relative cost of such efforts would be a small percentage of the total investment for a large scale mixed-use development.

"Riverfront municipalities should take advantage of all opportunities to rehabilitate abandoned buildings and industrial and contaminated sites (known as RIS). Creatively upgrading, expanding, and reusing these sites and structures is an excellent way to infuse municipal centers with new capital investment and vitality."**

**Roadway and Access Improvements**

The River Road Extension Project, infrastructure upgrades intended to promote the viability of 1 Berkshire Place as an industrial site, has received funding and is estimated to commence with construction in March 2018. These improvements are needed to correct existing deficiencies and to supply adequate infrastructure, regardless of the type of redevelopment. Many of the benefits afforded to industrial development by the proposed road work are also beneficial to new mixed-use development, including:

1. Improved maneuverability for higher volumes of traffic.
2. Better highway access from within the City of Reading.
3. Safer pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
4. Correction of the intersection at Schuykill Avenue and Walnut Street.

These upgrades also provide enhanced access to existing neighborhoods and newly completed townhomes on Walnut Street. The proposed Overlay Zone does not preclude the realization of the proposed road work, nor does it preclude an industrial use at 1 Berkshire Place.
future changes in its student population. The proposed Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone would not limit RSD ability to expand Northwest Elementary School, which is the facility that would be most directly impacted by population increases within the proposed Overlay Zone.

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Although environmental regulations require a higher level of remediation for residential development, it is technically feasible to complete the additional remediation necessary to develop the site for mixed-use commercial, office, and residential use.

*Of the 122 soil samples collected and analyzed, 30 exceed a residential cleanup standard. While remediation will be required to address these impacts, it will only be required in the residential areas, and if the grading plan allows, much of this material could be consolidated into open space or onto commercial areas. So there will have to be additional soil management costs as part of development, and sampling and analysis will need to be performed in residential areas that are remediated. But compared to transportation and disposal on-site, these costs are relatively minimal. Based on the assumption that materials can be managed on-site as part of redevelopal, I don’t see that the environmental impacts on the site would make such a redevelopment proposal financially infeasible.*

Jim Cinelli PE, Liberty Environmental, Inc.

Strategies available to manage remediated soils on-site can help to make environmental cleanup for residential development financially achievable, and the relative cost of such efforts would be a small percentage of the total investment for a large scale mixed-use development.

*“Riverfront municipalities should take advantage of all opportunities to rehabilitate abandoned buildings and industrial and contaminated sites (known as infill). Creatively upgrading, expanding, and reusing these sites and structures is an excellent way to infuse municipal centers with new capital investment and vitality.”*

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1. Improved maneuverability for higher volumes of traffic.
2. Better highway access from within the City of Reading.
3. Safer pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
4. Correction of the intersection at Schuylkill Avenue and Windsor Street.

These upgrades also provide enhanced access to existing neighborhoods and recently completed townhomes on Weiser Street. The proposed Overlay Zone does not preclude the realization of the proposed road work, nor does it preclude an industrial use at 1 Berkshire Place.
Urban Research & Development Corporation, City of Reading Comprehensive Plan, Draft, December 2015.

2 Other names previously used for this site include RiverView Industrial Park, Dave Memorial Park, Riverfront Commerce Center, Reading Grey Iron, and Berkshire Bottling Works. See also Dan Spitz, “New plan for bottling works in Reading reviews old objections,” Reading Eagle, June 29, 2010.


Riverfront development is most appropriate for water-dependent uses (e.g. boating, fishing, waterfront commerce and recreation) and water-enhanced activities that do not require direct access to the water, but whose riverfront location adds to the public’s use and enjoyment of the water’s edge (e.g. parks, playgrounds, restaurants, museums, and mixed-use retail office and residential), rather than non water-dependent uses (e.g. car washes, auto sales and storage operations, auto repair facilities, self-storage units, and manufacturing not involving waterfront transportation).

4 This report is not intended to be a comprehensive history or investigation of 1 Berkshire Place or its surrounding context. Rather, it is intended to address several key considerations that lead to the proposal of a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone for Northwest Reading.


6 Ibid, p. 10.


Although actual manufacturing employment densities vary significantly based on the specific type of production (durable, nondurable, heavy, light, automated, etc.), total employment potential is generally limited by horizontal manufacturing processes planned for one-story building typologies.

9 City of Reading, PA, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 600 Zoning, Section 815.


11 Ibid, p. 53.


15 Mallach, p. 53.

16 Ibid, p. 47.

17 Ibid, p. 64.

18 Ibid, p. 5.

19 Ibid, p. 20.

20 Callari et al., p. 10.


22 The only parcel included in this figure that is not located with the existing M-C Manufacturing Commercial or H-M Heavy Manufacturing zoning districts is the 5.0 acre parcel at Windsor & Ritter Streets owned by the Reading School District, which is located within the K-3 Residential zoning district.

23 Of the approximately 600.7 acres of land area within the City of Reading located within 1000 feet of the east bank of the Schuylkill River, approximately 65.3 acres is attributable to undeveloped formerly industrial parcels. However, the total area of these parcels, including portions beyond 1000 feet of the east bank of the Schuylkill River, is 99.0 acres.


25 Example: “Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center launched 22 years ago to save an old industrial building with 360,000 square feet across the United Nations in Brooklyn, NY. The building was owned by the city, but it was run down and not managed well. A local community development organization stepped in to help save the building. It helped to create an independent company to redevelop the building and lease it out to local producers. Today, GMDC completed purchase and renovation of seven buildings in the Greenpoint neighborhood totaling over 700,000 square feet and 150 tenants. The average tenant is about 18 years in business, and average salaries are $48,000—well above local service sector salaries. The tenants are predominantly local artist/scientists building products for the local market, but at manufacturing scales.” See Nisha Mistri, Economic Opportunity and Small-Scale Manufacturing, Smart Growth America, available at https://smartgrowthamerica.org/economic-opportunity-small-scale-manufacturing/, 2017.
Report on the Proposed Riverfront Overlay Zone for Northwest Reading, PA

40 City of Reading, PA, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 600 Zoning, Section 815.
41 City of Reading, PA, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 600 Zoning, Section 702.
42 City of Reading City Council, Resolutions 89/70-2012.
43 Example: "First built in 1883, as the city of Easton's first economic development initiative, the Simon Silk Mill housed the manufacturing of textiles until the late 1960s. Acquired by the Easton Redevelopment Authority in 2006 it was studied for feasibility as a creative complex for individual artists and professionals and deemed a cultural development project. "SILK" will become a tour de force in the creative community as a live work location." See VM Development Group LLC, Residential Projects, available at http://www.undevelopmentgroup.com/project/simon-silk-mill-cl/, 2017.
44 Synergy Environmental, Inc., Spotts Stevens, & McCoy, document entitled Baseline Environmental Report, Former Reading Iron Company Site (Olney Street Storms), Pennsylvania Lines LLC Rail Yard, and Metropolitan Edison Company Parcels and Former Reading Grey Iron Castings Property, City of Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania (the "BER"). The BER is maintained by the PaDEP in the Department’s Southcentral Regional Office file room in the Reading Iron Company/Grey Iron Castings file, Land Recycling Program ID Nos. 3-6-1-21720, 3-6-1-21721, 3-6-1-21722 and 3-6-1-21723.
46 Berks County Planning Commission, Draft Highway and Transit Transportation Improvement Program, Reading Area Transportation Study FY 2017 – 2020, May 2016, Section 2, p. 25.
47 McCormick Taylor, River Road Extension Project, plan drawings available at https://www.readingpa.gov/content/river-road-extension-project.
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 600 ZONING BY AMENDING SECTION 600-501 BY AMENDING THE ZONING MAP TO PROVIDE FOR THE RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICT LOCATED WITHIN CERTAIN PORTIONS OF THE CITY OF READING IN MANUFACTURING COMMERCIAL (M-C), R-3 RESIDENTIAL, AND COMMERCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD (C-N) ZONING DISTRICTS AND AMENDING SECTION 600-815 DISTRICTS BY AMENDING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT (RR) OVERLAY ZONE. THE AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING MAP AND THE PARCELS OF LAND TO BE OVERLAID BY THE RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT ARE:

ALL THOSE CERTAIN TRACTS OF LAND BOUNDED ON THE NORTH BY RIVER ROAD, BOUNDED ON THE WEST BY RAILROAD PROPERTY OWNED BY PENNSYLVANIA LINES LLC (NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORP), AND BOUNDED ON THE SOUTH BY TULPEHOCKEN STREET AND BY BUTTONWOOD STREET AND BY RAILROAD PROPERTY OWNED BY PENNSYLVANIA LINES LLC (NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORP), AND BOUNDED ON THE EAST BY SCHUYLKILL AVENUE, INCLUDING:

1. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF SCHUYLKILL AVENUE BETWEEN RIVER ROAD AND WEST BUTTONWOOD STREET,
2. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF MILTIMORE STREET BETWEEN RIVER ROAD AND WEST BUTTONWOOD STREET,
3. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF GORDON STREET BETWEEN RIVER ROAD AND WEST BUTTONWOOD STREET,
4. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF GEORGE STREET INCLUDING BAER PARK BETWEEN WEST WINDSOR STREET AND WEST DOUGLASS STREET
5. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF JOHNSON STREET BETWEEN WEST GREENWICH STREET AND WEST GREEN STREET AND BETWEEN GORDON STREET AND SPEIDEL STREET,
6. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF TULPEHOCKEN STREET BETWEEN WEST DOUGLASS STREET AND WEST GREEN STREET,
7. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF TULPEHOCKEN STREET BETWEEN LAFAYETTE STREET AND WEST BUTTONWOOD STREET,
8. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF EISENBROWN STREET BETWEEN WEST OLEY STREET AND WEST GREEN STREET,
9. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE WEST AND EAST SIDE OF CLINTON STREET BETWEEN RIVER ROAD AND EISENBROWN STREET,
10. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF RIVER ROAD BETWEEN SCHUYLKILL AVENUE AND THE RIGHT-OF-WAY COMMONLY KNOWN AS OPPORTUNITY DRIVE,
11. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF WEST WINDSOR STREET BETWEEN GEORGE STREET AND SCHUYLKILL AVENUE,
12. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF WEST DOUGLASS STREET BETWEEN CLINTON STREET AND SCHUYLKILL AVENUE,
13. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF WEST OLEY STREET BETWEEN CLINTON STREET AND SCHUYLKILL AVENUE,
14. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF WEST GREENWICH STREET BETWEEN CLINTON STREET AND SCHUYLKILL AVENUE,
15. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF WEST GREEN STREET BETWEEN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY COMMONLY KNOWN AS OPPORTUNITY DRIVE AND SCHUYLKILL AVENUE,
16. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF LAFAYETTE STREET BETWEEN TULPEHOCKEN STREET AND MILTIMORE STREET,
17. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE OF SPEIDEL STREET BETWEEN TULPEHOCKEN STREET AND GORDON STREET,
18. ALL PARCELS SITUATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF WEST BUTTONWOOD STREET BETWEEN TULPEHOCKEN STREET AND SCHUYLKILL AVENUE,
19. PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 1 BERKSHIRE PLACE, THE FORMER GRAY IRON AND READING IRON PROPERTIES, INCLUDING THE RIGHT-OF-WAY COMMONLY KNOWN AS OPPORTUNITY DRIVE, INTERSECTING AT THE NORTHMOST PORTION WITH CLINTON STREET AT RIVER ROAD AND AT THE SOUTHMOST PORTION WITH TULPEHOCKEN STREET AT WEST GREEN STREET,
20. TRACTS, EASEMENTS, UNNAMED ALLEYS, AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY INCIDENTAL TO THE PROPERTIES SITUATED WITHIN THE BOUNDARY DESCRIBED HEREIN,

BACKGROUND

WHEREAS, the City of Reading Codified Ordinances sets forth Chapter 600, entitled “City of Reading Zoning Ordinance” which chapter has been amended from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Reading desires to amend the Official Zoning Map and portions of the Zoning Ordinance to provide a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zone in portions of northwest Reading as depicted as attached in Exhibit A, in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 609 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, as enunciated in 53 P.S. Section 10609.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Reading hereby ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Amending Section 600-501 Zoning Map and Boundaries of the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance to provide that:

A. That portion located in the City of Reading of all certain tracts of land bounded on the north by River Road, and bounded on the west by railroad property owned by Pennsylvania Lines LLC (Norfolk Southern Corp), and bounded on the south by Tulpehocken Street and by Buttonwood Street, and by railroad property owned by Pennsylvania Lines LLC (Norfolk Southern Corp), and bounded on the east by Schuylkill Avenue, including:

1. All parcels situated on the west side of Schuylkill Avenue between River Road and West Buttonwood Street,
2. All parcels situated on the west and east side of Miltimore Street between River Road and West Buttonwood Street,
3. All parcels situated on the west and east side of Gordon Street between River Road and West Buttonwood Street,
4. All parcels situated on the west and east side of George Street including Baer Park between West Windsor Street and West Douglass Street,
5. All parcels situated on the west and east side of Johnson Street between West Greenwich Street and West Green Street and between Gordon Street and Speidel Street,
6. All parcels situated on the west and east side of Tulpehocken Street between West Douglass Street and West Green Street,
7. All parcels situated on the east side of Tulpehocken Street between Lafayette Street and West Buttonwood Street,
8. All parcels situated on the west and east side of Eisenbrown Street between West Oley Street and West Green Street,
9. All parcels situated on the west and east side of Clinton Street between River Road and Eisenbrown Street,
10. All parcels situated on the south side of River Road between Schuylkill Avenue and the right-of-way commonly known as Opportunity Drive,
11. All parcels situated on the north and south side of West Windsor Street between George Street and Schuylkill Avenue,
12. All parcels situated on the north and south side of West Douglass Street between Clinton Street and Schuylkill Avenue,
13. All parcels situated on the north and south side of West Oley Street between Clinton Street and Schuylkill Avenue,
14. All parcels situated on the north and south side of West Greenwich Street between Clinton Street and Schuylkill Avenue,
15. All parcels situated on the north and south side of West Green Street between the right-of-way commonly known as Opportunity Drive and Schuylkill Avenue,
16. All parcels situated on the south side of Lafayette Street between Tulpehocken Street and Miltimore Street,
17. All parcels situated on the north and south side of Speidel Street between Tulpehocken Street and Gordon Street,
18. All parcels situated on the north side of West Buttonwood Street between Tulpehocken Street and Schuylkill Avenue,
19. Property commonly known as 1 Berkshire Place, the former Gray Iron and Reading Iron Properties, including the right-of-way commonly known as Opportunity Drive, intersecting at the northern most portion with Clinton Street at River Road and at the southmost portion with Tulpehocken Street at West Green Street,
20. Tracts, easements, unnamed alleys, and rights-of-way incidental to the properties situated within the boundary described herein,

and currently constituting a portion of the M-C Manufacturing Commercial, R-3 Residential, and C-N Commercial Neighborhood Zoning Districts, shall henceforth also constitute a Riverfront Redevelopment Overlay Zoning District.

SECTION 2. Amending Section 600-815D Districts of the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Section 600-815D(3) of the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended so as to provide that:

Minimum business uses. Allowing no more than 35% (approximately 4 floors) of the total floor area of all enclosed buildings after completion of the development of the tract to be occupied by business uses. Areas used for vehicle parking shall not be considered in this calculation.
Section 600-815D(5) of the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended so as to provide that:

Riverfront access. The RR Overlay Zone offers great flexibility to the developer as an optional form of development. In return for such flexibility, a developer shall only be eligible to use this RR Overlay Zone if the developer commits to providing public access to and along all portions of the Schuylkill Riverfront that are under the control of the applicant or that are under the ownership of any agency to such public access being provided by the applicant. The tract shall be designed to provide continuous public pedestrian and bicycle access from sunrise to sundown, at a minimum, from public streets to the riverfront, and then along the length of the riverfront along the entire tract. Such public access shall be provided upon completion of each phase for land in that phase adjacent to the riverfront. Complete public access along the entire riverfront shall be provided upon completion of the development, including provisions for future extension of public pathways from the edges of the tract. The Planning Commission may approve alternative access through the tract if public access at a particular part of the riverfront is not feasible.

SECTION 2. The zoning officer of the City of Reading is hereby authorized to take such actions as may be necessary to cause the Official Zoning Map of the City of Reading to be amended in accordance with the terms and provisions of this Ordinance and shall take such other actions as may be necessary to effectuate the terms of this Ordinance.

SECTION 3. All ordinances or resolutions, or parts of ordinances or resolutions, insofar as they are inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. The provisions of this Ordinance shall be severable and if any of its provisions shall be held to be unconstitutional or illegal, the validity of any other remaining portions of the Ordinance shall not be effected thereby. It is hereby expressly declared as the intent of the City Council of the City of Reading that this Ordinance would have been adopted had such unconstitutional or illegal provision or provisions had not been included herein.

SECTION 5. All other provisions of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Reading Codified Ordinances shall remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. This Ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after its enactment by City Council.

ENACTED this ___ day of ____________, 2017.

CITY OF READING, Berks County, Pennsylvania

By: __________________________
President of Council

Attest: ________________________