

Drafted by Property Maintenance Staff/Law
Sponsored by/Referred by Managing Director
Introduced on November 9, 2015
Advertised on November 16, 2015

LUNDA A. KELLENER, City Clerk of the City of Reading, Pa., do hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original Ordinance passed by the Council of the City of Reading, on the 23 day of Nov A. D. 20 15. Witness my hand and seal of the said City this 25 day of Nov A. D. 20 15

[Signature]
CITY CLERK

BILL NO. 78 -2015
AN ORDINANCE

AMENDING THE CITY OF READING CODIFIED ORDINANCES CHAPTER 308 HOUSING BY RETITLING PART I AND PART III, DELETING NON-APPLICABLE DEFINITIONS, CHANGING ALL REFERENCES TO HOUSING PERMITS TO HOUSING REGISTRATION, FURTHER DEFINING THE REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS AS WELL AS RENAMING THE APPLICABLE APPEALS BOARD TO THE CODE AND LICENSE APPEALS BOARD.

SECTION 1. Amending the City of Reading Codified Ordinances Chapter 308 Housing Ordinance by retitling Part I and Part III, deleting non-applicable definitions, changing all references to housing permits to housing registration, further defining the registration and inspection requirements as well as renaming the applicable appeals board to the Code and License Appeals Board, as attached in Exhibit A.

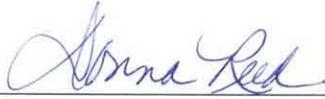
SECTION 2. All other parts of the Ordinance remain unchanged.

SECTION 3. In the event any provision, section, sentence, clause or part of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect or impair any remaining provision, section, sentence, clause or part of this Ordinance, it being the intent of the City that the remainder of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. All ordinances or parts of ordinances not in accord with this Ordinance are hereby repealed insofar as they conflict herewith.

SECTION 5. This ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after its adoption in accordance with Sections 219 and 221 of the City of Reading Home Rule Charter.

Enacted Nov 23, 2015


Vice President of Council

Attest:


City Clerk

Submitted to Mayor: 
Date: 11/24/15
Received by the Mayor's Office: 
Date: 11/24/15
Approved by Mayor: 
Date: 11/24/15
Vetoed by Mayor: _____
Date: _____

EXHIBIT A

CHAPTER 308

HOUSING

PART 1

**RENTAL AND VACANT PROPERTY
REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION**

§308-101. *Definitions. The following words and phrases when used in this chapter shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise: Additional definitions for purpose and use of the property are found within the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance.*

~~ACTIVELY MARKETED FOR SALE~~—occurs only when a “for sale” sign has been placed on the property with accurate contact information and the owner has done at least one of the following:

- ~~1) engaged the services of a licensee under the act of February 19, 1980 (P.L. 15, No 9), known as the Real Estate Licensing and Registration Act, to place the property in a Multiple Listing Service or otherwise market the property;~~
- ~~2) placed weekly or more frequent advertisements in print or electronic media; or~~
- ~~3) distributed printed advertisements.~~

~~BOARDING HOUSE~~—a building or structure used to shelter persons who are not “relatives” of the operator, and who live in the building by pre-arrangement and for definite periods of time and compensation, and which may or may not provide meals for residents, and which does not involve individual dwelling units that are each occupied by a “family.” This term shall not include a commercial hotel/motel that serves transient visitors to the area, a personal care home, a nursing home, a dormitory or residence hall owned or operated by a college or university, or a Group Institution.

~~BUSINESS PRIVILEGE LICENSE~~ - a license issued by the City of Reading Tax Division *Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau* per City of Reading Codified Ordinance Chapter 24 549, Taxation, Special, Part 5-4, Business Privilege Tax, authorizing one to perform business including, for purposes of this Part, renting.

~~BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX~~—the tax payable to the City of Reading, Division of Tax, per City of Reading Codified Ordinance Chapter 24, Taxation, Special, Part 5, Business

~~Privilege Tax, on, for purposes of this Part, the annual gross receipts derived from rental of a property or unit.~~

~~**CAPACITY TO RENT**—any dwelling unit that is fit for habitation by humans as determinable by applicable Building and Property Maintenance Codes [Chapter 180, Construction Codes], and is not the owner's primary residence and as is permitted by the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance [Chapter 600].~~

~~**CODE AND LICENSE APPEALS BOARD** - *Board authorized to hear, among other things, appeals of and render decisions in matters concerning Housing matters.*~~

~~**CODES** - any State or local code or ordinance adopted, enacted or in effect in and for the City of Reading. including, but not limited to, the International/City of Reading Building Code [Chapter 180, Part 8], Existing Building Code [Chapter 180, Part 5], Plumbing Code [Chapter 180, Part 9], Mechanical Code [Chapter 180, Part 6], Electrical Code [Chapter 180, Part 7], Fire Code [Chapter 180, Part 14], and Residential Code [Chapter 180, Part 4], and City of Reading Property Maintenance Code [Chapter 180, Part 13], Zoning Ordinance [Chapter 600], Recycling and Solid Waste Ordinance [Chapter 496, Part 2], and general nuisance ordinances.~~

~~**CODES OFFICIAL** - a City of Reading employee or authorized agent sworn to enforce the City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances. *This term is used interchangeably with Property Maintenance Inspector (PMI).*~~

~~**DWELLING UNIT**—a single unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.~~

~~**HABITABILITY**—any rental unit, building or dwelling that is suitable for human habitation and that is sanitary and free of vermin infestation and is in compliance with all City of Reading health and code regulations and Codified Ordinances.~~

~~**HOTEL UNIT**—any room or group of rooms located within a hotel or motel forming a single habitable unit used or intended to be used for living and sleeping only on a transient basis for a period of less than 30 days.~~

~~**HOUSING PERMIT**—A permit issued by the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division per the procedure established by this Chapter and the policies created in accordance therewith. This permit includes both rental and vacant properties.~~

~~**LEASE**—see “Rent.”~~

~~**LET**—see “Rent.”~~

~~**LOCAL RESPONSIBLE AGENT**—a person or agency retained or hired by a property owner to operate premises including, but not limited to, compliance with City of Reading Codified Ordinances and as a local contact.~~

~~**MULTIPLE DWELLING UNIT**—any dwelling containing two or more dwelling units.~~

~~**OCCUPANT/TENANT**—a person renting or letting a rental unit from the owner thereof.~~

~~**OWNER** - any person, agent, operator, firm or corporation having a legal or equitable interest in the property; or recorded in the official records of the State, County or Municipality as holding title to the property; or otherwise having control of the property, including the guardian of the estate of any such person, and the executor or administrator of the estate of such person if ordered to take possession of real property by a court. *The record titleholder per Berks County Assessment Office.*~~

~~**PERSON**—any individual, firm, corporation, association, partnership or entity.~~

~~**PROPERTY MAINTENANCE DIVISION** - a division of the City of Reading *Community Development Department* administration under the Managing Director charged with enforcing the City of Reading Codified Ordinances governing issues including, but not limited to, housing, property maintenance, *health* and *trades blight*.~~

~~**PUBLIC OFFICER**—anyone authorized to enforce the City of Reading Codified Ordinances.~~

~~**QUALITY OF LIFE**—issues affecting the manner in which one lives or resides and habitability of a premise as governed by the City of Reading Codified Ordinances.~~

~~**REGISTRATION** - filing of an appropriate *a housing* application to register a property *parcel* as *required by this ordinance*.~~

~~**RENT**—compensation for providing a shelter or lodging for occupation or habitation by humans to reside, monetary or non-monetary.~~

~~**RENTING**—the act of permitting a unit to be used to provide a living arrangement for one or more persons not the owner thereof whether or not for compensation.~~

~~**RENTAL UNIT**—a rooming unit or dwelling unit let for rent, a non-owner occupied rooming or dwelling unit, or a dwelling unit occupied by an owner and additional unrelated individuals. A rental unit shall not include a hotel unit. A rental unit includes dwelling units under lease purchase agreements or long term (greater than 6 months) agreements of sale.~~

~~**ROOMING UNIT**—an individual room within a “Boarding House” as said term is defined herein that is suitable for human lodging or occupancy.~~

~~**SALES AGREEMENT**—a contract for the sale of real estate, including a contract for a deed.~~

~~**STUDENT**—an individual who is enrolled or has made application and been accepted at a university, college or trade school and whose primary occupation is as a student or who is on a semester or summer break from studies at a college, university or trade school or any combination of such persons. The term "student" shall apply to both undergraduate and graduate students alike. The residents of a student home share living expenses and may live and cook as a single housekeeping unit but may also only share access to cooking facilities and not live and cook as a single housekeeping unit.~~

~~**STUDENT HOME**—a living arrangement for at least two students to a maximum of three students (as defined in this Part) unrelated by blood, marriage or legal adoption. The term student home shall not include dormitories, fraternity house or sorority house. The term student home shall be used interchangeably with the term student housing.~~

~~**STUDENT HOUSING**—see “student home.”~~

~~**VACANT PROPERTY**—A residential, commercial or mixed use (residential and other permitted use) property shall be deemed to be a "vacant property" if it is a vacant property that is actively marketed for sale, a vacant property for rehabilitation, a vacant property that is a vacation/second residence and a vacant property that is code compliant.~~

~~**ZONING** - City of Reading Zoning Ordinance [Chapter 600].~~

~~**ZONING PERMIT** - A permit issued by the City of Reading Zoning Division per the City of Reading Zoning Ordinance [Chapter 600]. authorizing and/or registering a unit as a rental.~~

§308-102. Housing Permit Registration Required.

~~No person or entity shall let, rent or cause to be vacant or occupied any non owner occupied properties unless that person first applies for, renews and obtains a non transferable Housing Permit issued by the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division per the procedure established by this code and policies created thereunder. *Owners of residential and mixed-use parcels are required to apply for and renew a housing registration issued by the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division per the procedure established by this code and policies created hereunder.*~~

~~*Single-family owner occupied properties are excluded from this requirement.*~~

§308-103. Application for a Housing Permit Registration.

A. Applications for a Housing Permit *Registration* shall be made in writing or by electronic application on forms prepared and provided by the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division and shall be accompanied by payment of the applicable fee(s) *as per the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212*. Such forms shall require, but shall not be limited to the following information and shall be accepted and sworn to by the owner:

1. The name, business address, date of birth, ~~and~~ telephone numbers, (business and mobile), and driver's license, ~~or~~ state issued identification *or governmental identification* number(s) of all of the owner(s) of any ~~dwelling unit~~ *residential* and mixed-use parcel. A Federal EIN (employee identification number) must be provided if the owner is a corporation, limited liability company, or partnership.
2. The address of the premises ~~at~~ *for* which the ~~dwelling unit or rooming unit is located~~ *housing registration is required*.
3. A ~~valid zoning permit number~~ *application* as ~~directed by the City of Reading Zoning Office~~ *applicable*.
- D. ~~Verification of~~ *Participation in a recognized* trash/*disposal* program and ~~the City's recycling with participation with approved~~ program will be verified.
- E. The Business Privilege License Number as provided by the ~~City of Reading Citizens Services Center~~ *Berks Earned Income Tax Bureau*.
- F. ~~A completed tenant listing, if applicable, on a form prepared and provided by the Property Maintenance Division providing the following information of all persons occupying the building for which the permit is sought, including children under 18 years of age, full name, unit, apartment or floor number/designation (where applicable), and term of lease including date of entry and departure. If the owner has reason to believe that such disclosure may jeopardize the personal safety and well being of a tenant or occupant and provides the Property Maintenance Division with such information and documentation to support such belief as may be reasonably required by the Property Maintenance Division, such disclosure shall not be required. If the unit is not rented at the time of application, the owner shall submit the tenant listing as prescribed above within 30 days of occupancy of the unit and in no event later than the next bi-annual date for such submission as required by this Part.~~

2. ~~The registration of a rental or vacant property with the Property Maintenance Division shall be required within 15 days of the subject property becoming a "vacant property"~~

~~or being marketed or used as a rental property as provided herein and shall be accompanied by the payment of the applicable registration fee~~

B. *Registration of any parcel required to have a housing registration is required within fifteen (15) days of the change of ownership or change of use.*

C. Special provisions for properties with a valid "Housing Permit" issued prior to December 31, 2007 but lacking valid zoning permits for Multiple Dwelling or Rooming House use.

1. Any property previously registered with the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division and holding a valid "Housing Permit" issued by the Reading Property Maintenance Division prior to December 31, 2007 and has remained current shall be required to apply to the Zoning Administrator for a zoning permit prior to submitting an application for a Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration**. The Zoning Administrator shall make an initial determination as to whether the subject property is located within a zoning district where multi-family rental use is legally permitted as an allowed use or a use previously approved as a Conditional Use pursuant to subsection D of §27-1203 of the Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

(a) If the Zoning Administrator determines that the subject property is located within a zoning district where multi-family rental use is legally permitted in accordance with the foregoing provisions in Subsection A, it will be granted a zoning permit as a legally permitted use under the applicable zoning, subject to subsection B hereunder, and it will be required to comply with all of the provisions of this chapter and any other applicable chapters as verified upon inspection by the Property Maintenance Division.

(b) If the subject property had a valid "Housing Permit" as of December 31, 2007 but is determined to be located within a zoning district where multi-family rental use is not legally permitted in accordance with the foregoing provisions in Subsection A, it will be granted a zoning permit as a prior "non-conforming use" by the Zoning Administrator within the meaning of subsection B of §27-607 of the Zoning Ordinance and remain eligible for a Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** provided it conforms to the remaining requirements of the City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances.

2. The Zoning Administrator shall make a secondary determination as to whether the number of dwelling units present exceeds the number of units previously recorded for the premises in City records. A Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** will be denied until the property is modified to comply with the number of units previously recorded.

3. A zoning permit issued by the Zoning Administrator in accordance with Sections A and B hereinabove shall satisfy the requirements of §308-105 and the issuance of a Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** shall be subject to compliance with the remaining provisions of Subsection A.

§308-104. Annual Renewal of Housing ~~Permit~~ Registration.

- A. ~~Effective January 2, 2012, e~~Each Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** shall be renewed by the registrant on or before the 1st of April in each and every calendar year regardless of when the original ~~permit registration~~ was ~~issued~~ **filed** in the previous year. If the 1st of April falls upon a Saturday, Sunday or holiday the deadline shall be the close of business on the next business day. Renewal of a Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** shall be made in writing or by electronic application upon forms prescribed by the Property Maintenance Division. Submission of annual renewal forms shall be accompanied by payment of the specified renewal fee *as per the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212.*
- B. Annual Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** Renewal forms shall require the owner, in addition to the information specifically required in other provisions of this Chapter, to provide the following: (a) ~~disclose and/or confirm the number, name and age of residents of dwelling unit in each building and the number of tenants residing in each dwelling unit,~~ (b) the operational status of fire and smoke alarms, the operational status of fire escapes and emergency exits, if applicable, and ~~(c)~~ **(b)** any changes or alterations to the interior or exterior structural and/or mechanical components or systems of the building or any individual dwelling unit therein including repairs due to casualty loss, since the date of the ~~issue~~ **application** of the Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration** or the last renewal thereof, whichever is later. The Annual ~~Permit-Registration~~ Renewal forms shall further require the owner to verify that false statements therein made are subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. Section 4904 relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.
- C. Submission of Annual Renewal Forms after the April 1st deadline shall be subject to a surcharge of ~~Three Hundred Dollars (\$300) per parcel~~ *as provided in the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212.* ~~for each month or fraction thereof following the said deadline. The City of Reading may pursue in personam action (legal proceeding against the person) for the collection of any outstanding surcharges owed.~~ **All delinquent accounts may be given to collections as per this part.** Failure to submit an Annual Renewal Form as required herein before July 1st in each and every year may result in the immediate revocation of the Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration and be subject to §308-112, Failure to Apply for Housing ~~Permit~~ Registration.**
- D. In the event of revocation of the Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration**, the property owner must file an Application for Reinstatement upon a form prescribed by the Property

Maintenance Division and the filing of said application shall be accompanied by payment of all outstanding *Property Maintenance* fees and surcharges.

- E. Notwithstanding the filing of an Application for Reinstatement nothing herein shall prevent the City of Reading from undertaking legal action to enforce any other provision of the City of Reading Codified Ordinances, including action to enjoin any continued occupancy of the property by tenants residing therein and/or action to abate any nuisance, dangerous condition or other threat to the health and safety of the tenants residing therein or the *general* public.
- F. ~~In the event the Housing Permit is revoked for a property that was previously approved for multi-family rental housing but designated a non-conforming use by the Zoning Administrator, failure of the owner to file an Application for Reinstatement of a Housing Permit *Registration* within six months of the date of revocation of the Housing Permit *Registration* as provided herein shall, in the absence of any showing of reasonable excuse or good cause, be considered an "abandonment" of such use in accordance with the provisions of §600-607 F and G of the Zoning Ordinance. The burden of proving reasonable excuse or good cause for a failure to file an Application for Reinstatement shall rest solely upon the property owner and the determination of the same can only be made upon a majority vote of City Council.~~

§308-105. Denial of Application for a Housing Permit *Registration*.

A. ~~The City may deny~~ ~~A~~ ~~a~~ Housing Permit ~~Registration~~ shall not be issued or renewed *renewal* to any applicant if said rental *housing* unit, building or dwelling is not in compliance with the City of Reading Codified Ordinances any State or local code or ordinance adopted, enacted or in effect in and for the City of Reading including, but not limited to, City of Reading Building Code [Chapter 5, Part 1B], Existing Building Code [Chapter 5, Part 1C], Plumbing Code [Chapter 5, Part 2], Mechanical Code [Chapter 5, Part 5], Electrical Code [Chapter 5, Part 4], Fire Code [Chapter 5, Part 3], and Residential Code [Chapter 5, Part 8], Property Maintenance Code [Chapter 5, Part 6], Solid Waste and Recycling Ordinance [Chapter 20, Part 1], Health Code [Chapter 10, Part 1] and Zoning Ordinance [Chapter 27], or has failed an inspection, is in pending litigation for violations of the aforesaid Codified Ordinances **Code** or has been declared uninhabitable and/or condemned by the appropriate authority with jurisdiction.

B. The City may deny an application for a Housing Permit *Registration* if the applicant (or in the case of a corporate or similar entity, its owners or affiliates) has a demonstrable history on three or more occasions of failing to address cited code violations, including lack of utilities, that present immediate threats to human health and safety within the compliance period specified by the Property Maintenance Division, currently has unresolved codes violations, *delinquent Property Maintenance fees* or has any tax delinquencies.

C. The City of Reading Property Maintenance Division is hereby authorized to placard and condemn a property for which a Housing **Permit Registration** has not been obtained ~~from~~ **filed with** the Property Maintenance Division as required by this Part. Such action ~~shall require~~ **requires** the ~~immediate~~ vacation of the property ~~or vacation within a specific and reasonable period of time~~ as determined by the Property Maintenance Division in the exercise of its discretion.

§308-106. Revocation of a Housing **Permit Registration.**

~~1.~~ The City of Reading Property Maintenance Division shall, have the authority to revoke or suspend the Housing **Permit Registration** of any ~~rental~~ **housing** unit, building, rooming house, or dwelling that it determines within the reasonable exercise of its discretion to be uninhabitable by humans, and in noncompliance with the ~~City of Reading Codified Ordinances including, but not limited to, City of Reading Building Code [Chapter 5, Part 1B], Existing Building Code [Chapter 5, Part 1C], Plumbing Code [Chapter 5, Part 2], Mechanical Code [Chapter 5, Part 5], Electrical Code [Chapter 5, Part 4], Fire Code [Chapter 5, Part 3], and Residential Code [Chapter 5, Part 8], Property Maintenance Code [Chapter 5, Part 6], Solid Waste and Recycling Ordinance [Chapter 20, Part 1], Health Code [Chapter 10, Part 1] and Zoning Ordinance [Chapter 27],~~ **any state or local code or ordinance adopted, enacted or in effect in and for the City of Reading** or has failed an inspection. A Housing **Permit Registration** may also be revoked if it is determined that the ~~permit~~ **registration** was ~~issued~~ **filed** upon material misrepresentations, errors or omissions set forth in the application. ~~for original issue renewal as applicable.~~

2. The City may revoke a Housing **Permit Registration** if the applicant (or in the case of a corporate or similar entity, its owners or affiliates) has a record of chronic codes violations; **and** currently has unresolved codes violations, **delinquent Property Maintenance fees** or has any tax delinquency.

3. A notice of a revocation of a Housing **Permit Registration** shall set forth the reason for the revocation and shall be provided in writing to the last known owner of record.

§308-107. ~~Transfer of Ownership and~~ Change of Address.

A. ~~It shall be the duty of each owner of a dwelling unit or rooming unit to notify the Property Maintenance Division of any change in ownership of the in compliance with the requirements of § 4 303 of Chapter 4 of the City of Reading Codified Ordinances, as amended.~~ **Any owner of a residential and mixed-use parcel governed by this subpart who relocates or changes mailing address shall file written notice of the same with the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division within 10 days of such relocation or change in**

mailing address. Failure to provide such notice will not excuse an owner from penalties due to a violation under this Part.

~~2. — A Housing Permit issued hereunder does not attach to the real estate title and does not pass or transfer to any person or entity who acquires ownership of the property upon which the dwelling unit or rooming unit is situated. The prospective new owner of a property upon which housing is permitted shall submit a completed application for a new Housing Permit to the Property Maintenance Division no later than 15 days after transfer of title. Said application for a new Housing Permit shall be compliant with the applicable rules set forth in this Chapter and issuance of a new Housing Permit shall be further conditioned upon inspection of the premises by the Property Maintenance Division and a determination of compliance of the premises with the applicable requirements of the City of Reading Codified Ordinances.~~

~~3. — Any owner of a housing unit governed by this Part who relocates or changes mailing address shall file written notice of the same with the Berks County Assessment Office and the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division within ten (10) days of such relocation or change in mailing address. Failure to provide such notice shall result in the imposition of a \$150 penalty, which shall be payable within 15 days from the date of imposition.~~

~~4. — The failure of a new owner to make timely application for a new Housing Permit as provided hereinabove shall render the property an illegal unit subject to the processes and penalties contained in §11-113, Failure to Obtain Housing Permit.~~

§308-108. Inspection.

1. — Initial Inspection.

~~A. If an initial application inspection is required pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter upon receipt of a fully completed application for a Housing Permit and receipt of payment of the applicable fee the Property Maintenance Division shall within 10 days of said receipt schedule an exterior and interior inspection of the dwelling unit or rooming unit to be performed no later than 30 days from said receipt to determine if the dwelling unit or rooming unit is compliant with the applicable City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances. If the City inspector performing the inspection determines that the dwelling unit or rooming unit complies with the applicable City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances, the inspector shall so advise the owner and report the same in writing to the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division. Upon receipt of such written report of compliance and a determination that all other requirements have been met the Property Maintenance Division shall issue the Housing Permit.~~

~~B. In the event the City's inspector determines that the dwelling unit or rooming unit is in violation of one or more of the applicable provisions of the City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances, the Property Maintenance Division shall be instructed not to issue the Housing Permit. Additionally, the City Official shall issue a notice of violation as provided in the appropriate Code. Further, if the violation is not corrected within the time frame established on the notice of violation the City Official shall commence the appropriate legal proceedings as permitted by the applicable Code. The owner shall notify the Property Maintenance Division of correction, remediation and/or abatement of the violation. Within 10 days of receipt of said notification from the owner, the Property Maintenance Division shall schedule a re-inspection of the dwelling unit or rooming unit to determine if the violations set forth in the notice of violation have been remedied, corrected and/or abated. If the Codes Official determines that the violations have been remedied, corrected and/or abated in accordance with the applicable City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances, the Code Official shall so advise the owner and Property Maintenance Division and in so doing authorize issuance of the Housing Permit. Occupancy of the dwelling unit or rooming unit is prohibited until a Housing Permit is issued.~~

~~2~~ — 1. **Renewal Inspections**

- ~~A. An inspection of a rental unit as defined in this Chapter shall be performed by Property Maintenance Division if necessitated by reported changes to a rental unit on the Annual Rental Housing Permit Renewal form or, in the absence of reported changes, on a revolving basis not less than every 2 years nor more than 5 years from the date of last inspection pursuant to the City of Reading Housing Property Inspection Program. *All properties that are subjected to registration will be placed into a routine inspection cycle to determine if the parcel is compliant with the applicable codes and codified ordinances. It is the responsibility of the owner to make tenant(s) aware of the date and time of the inspection and obtain tenant consent.*~~
- ~~B. 2. If the Property Maintenance Division Official performing the inspection determines that the dwelling unit or rooming unit complies with the applicable City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances, the Official shall so advise the owner, make the appropriate entry in the official records for the said property maintained by the Property Maintenance Division and issue an official certificate of compliance. *An inspection of all applicable parcels will be on a revolving basis not less than every 2 years nor more than every 5 years from the start date of the previous routine inspection.*~~
- ~~C. 3. In the event the Property Maintenance Division Official performing the inspection determines that the dwelling unit or rooming unit is in violation of the applica-~~

~~ble City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances, the Property Maintenance Division shall withhold the renewal of the Housing Permit until the violations are corrected and the property is determined to be in compliance with the applicable Codes and Codified Ordinances. In addition, the City Official shall issue a Notice of Violation as provided for in the applicable provision of the Code and Codified Ordinances. Failure of the property owner to correct the specified violations within the time frame established on the Notice of Violation shall result in the revocation of the Housing Permit and an authorized City Official shall commence the appropriate legal proceedings to enforce the applicable Code and Codified Ordinances including but not limited to action to vacate the dwelling unit or rooming unit as operation thereof is prohibited without a valid Housing Permit. Nothing herein shall prevent the City from taking any other action authorized by §11-122 of this Chapter. In the event the property is vacated as a result of an order from the City Official it shall remain vacated until the Codes Official determines that the violations have remedied, corrected and/or abated. The owner shall notify the Property Maintenance Division of correction, remediation and/or abatement of the violation. Within 10 days of receipt of said notification from the owner, the Property Maintenance Division shall schedule a re-inspection of the dwelling unit or rooming unit to determine if the violations set forth in the notice of violation have been remedied, corrected and/or abated. If the Codes Official determines that the violations have been remedied, corrected and/or abated in accordance with the applicable City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances, the Code Official shall so advise the owner and Property Maintenance Division and in so doing authorize issuance of the Housing Permit. *An inspection will be conducted as per the Property Maintenance Division's Standard Operating Procedure and a report with any violations or a letter of compliance will be given to the owner as per Official Notices §308-117. The report will list all, if any, violations with a reasonable time identified to remedy the violation.*~~

D. An initial inspection, reinspection and/or extension inspection(s) may be necessary to achieve compliance.

E. Inspection fees and penalties are listed in the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212.

~~3. **Routine Inspection.** The Property Maintenance Division shall perform routine inspections on all dwelling units and rooming units subject to the provisions of the applicable City of Reading Codes and Codified Ordinances.~~

~~4. **F. Complaint Inspections.** Nothing in this Part shall preclude the Property Maintenance Division/Code Official from performing an inspection upon receipt of a complaint of a violation *or a violation identified by a Code Official* of the City of Reading codes and Codified Ordinances existing at the dwelling unit or rooming unit *parcel*. Said inspections shall be in accord with the applicable Codes and Ordinances and regulations and policies established by the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division. A complaint of violation shall include but not be limited to a violation of a City of Reading Code or Ordinance, e.g., Property Maintenance Code [Chapter 5, Part 6] and/or disruptive conduct report. *An*~~

inspection will be conducted as per the Property Maintenance Division's Standard Operating Procedure and a report with any violations or a letter of compliance will be given to the owner as per Official Notices §308-117. The report will list all, if any, violations with a reasonable time identified to remedy the violation.

5. **G. Search Warrant.** If any owner, occupant or other person in charge of a structure subject to the provisions of this Part refuses, impedes, inhibits, interferes with, restricts or obstructs entry and free access to every part of the structure or premises where inspection authorized by this Part is sought, the administrative authority, Property Maintenance Division, shall promptly apply for an administrative search or inspection warrant to a court of competent jurisdiction and shall supply all necessary affidavits and testimony to indicate that there is a reasonable or probable cause to conduct an inspection. The Property Maintenance Division is further authorized to apply for an injunction to a court of competent jurisdiction and seek injunctive relief as necessary.

6. ~~**Notice.** All notices scheduling an inspection shall be mailed via regular mail to the owner of record.~~

7. **H. Failure to Appear for Inspection.** If the owner or authorized agent cannot be available at the proposed time, said owner or authorized agent, shall provide no less than 24-hour written notice to the Property Maintenance Division. Upon failure to give such written notice or upon failure to gain entry, an administrative fee of \$150 *as provided in the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212* will ~~or be authorized~~ be assessed against the owner failing to supply written notice or appear. ~~If the property owner or authorized agent fails to appear for the second scheduled inspection an administrative fee of \$250 will be assessed against the property owner.~~ If the property owner or authorized agent fails to appear for a third scheduled inspection or any combination of scheduled inspections, cancellations or failure to gain entry, the Property Maintenance Division shall assess an administrative fee of \$400 *as provided in the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212* and may placard the subject property and/or promptly seek an administrative search or inspection warrant from a court of competent jurisdiction by supplying all necessary affidavits and testimony in support thereof.

~~§308-109. Housing Permit-Reserved.~~

~~Upon compliance by the owner of the dwelling unit or rooming unit of the requirements of this Part, the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division shall issue a Housing Permit on an official form containing the letterhead of the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division and a facsimile of the Official Seal which shall include but not be limited to the following:~~

~~A. Name, mailing address and telephone number (business and mobile) of owner.~~

- B. ~~Number of dwelling units permitted~~
- C. ~~Date of last application inspection.~~
- D. ~~Date of last inspection.~~
- E. ~~A place for date and initials of Code Official indicating performance of a routine or complaint inspection and whether or not violations were found.~~
- F. ~~Date of issuance of permit.~~
- G. ~~Date of required renewal of permit.~~
- H. ~~Printed name of person issuing permit.~~

§308-110. ~~Posting of the Housing Permit-Reserved.~~

~~The Housing Permit or an identical, clear and legible photocopy thereof shall be conspicuously posted and maintained in the front entryway, vestibule or other main entrance area of the dwelling unit or rooming unit so that the same is visible and observable from outside the building at the front of the property by City Code, Property Maintenance Division, or emergency personnel.~~

§308-111. Structural Changes

Any change in the structural condition or integrity of a property shall be reported in writing to the Property Maintenance Division within seven (7) days of such change. Prior to any change in the structural condition or integrity of a property, the owner shall obtain any necessary permits from the Building and Trades Office.

§308-112. Failure to Obtain Apply for Housing Permit Registration.

A. **Prohibition.** It shall be unlawful for the owner of any property to fail to obtain a *apply for Housing Permit Registration* as required in §11-103-§308-102, *Housing Permit Registration* Required.

B. **Surcharge.**

1. In the event an authorized City official determines an owner failed to obtain register a property necessary Housing Permit a non-compliance surcharge of \$1,000 per unit as provided in the City of Reading Fee Schedule § 212, Fees shall be im-

posed to the application fee and written notice of non-compliance shall be delivered personally, mailed to the owner by first class/certified mail or email at the last known address, as well as by posting written notice in the form of a placard on the front entrance of the subject property ~~notice~~. If the notice is returned showing that the letter was not delivered, a copy thereof shall be posted in a conspicuous place in or about the structure affected by such notice. Service upon any executive officer of a corporation shall be a sufficient, but not the exclusive method of service upon the corporation. Service upon any partner of a partnership shall be a sufficient but not the exclusive method of service upon the partnership.

2. Said notice of non-compliance shall advise the owner of the non-compliance surcharge and the requirement to ~~submit the Housing Permit application~~ **register the property** within fifteen (15) days from the date of the date of mailing and posting. Failure to submit a complete application ~~or file a written request for review or appeal~~ within the prescribed time shall result in the assessment of a continuing non-compliance surcharge of \$300 per unit per month or portion thereof ~~as per the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212~~ until such time as a complete application for a ~~required Housing Permit registration~~ is received by the Property Maintenance Division. The City of Reading may pursue an in personam action (legal proceeding against the person) for the collection of any outstanding surcharges owed.

3. **Review and Hearing.** ~~Upon payment of the fees and surcharges set forth in subsection 2 above, a property owner may make written request to the Director of the Department of Community Development for: (a) review of any fees or surcharges (including the calculation thereof) imposed upon a finding of non-compliance, or (b) for a separate administrative hearing to challenge or dispute a finding of non-compliance and/or the calculation of any fees or surcharges imposed as a result thereof. The Director of the Department of Community Development or his designee shall conduct any requested review of fees and surcharges.~~

~~In the event an administrative hearing is requested, the request shall be accompanied by a deposit of \$500 as security for the payment of costs in the event findings and calculations by the Property Maintenance Division is affirmed. The administrative hearing shall be conducted by one of the independent hearing officers separately appointed by City Council to conduct hearings for conditional use applications in housing matters. The assignment of an independent hearing officer in response to the request shall be made by the City Clerk. The property owner will be notified in writing of the administrative hearing date, which shall be within thirty (30) days of the request, and a written statement of findings of facts and conclusions of law shall be issued by the hearing officer within fifteen (15) days of said proceeding. The unexcused failure of the owner to appear for said hearing will result in the denial and dismissal of the challenge or dispute. The cost of the administrative hearing shall be borne by the City in the event the findings and calculations by City personnel are not fully affirmed.~~

§308-113. Owner and Occupant Duties.

A. Owner's Duties.

1. It shall be the duty of every owner to keep and maintain all ~~rental~~ **residential and mixed use parcels** units in compliance with all applicable codes and provisions of all applicable State laws and regulations and local ordinances, and to keep such property in good and safe condition and to be aware of, and to act to eliminate disruptive conduct in such ~~rental units~~ **parcels**.
2. ~~It shall be unlawful for any person or entity to offer, conduct, operate, or cause to be rented any rental unit within the City of Reading without a valid and current Housing Permit. It shall be the responsibility of every owner to employ policies and manage the residential and mixed use parcels under his/her control in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter, the City Codes and Codified Ordinances and applicable State laws.~~
3. ~~It shall be the responsibility of every owner to employ policies and manage the dwelling units under his/her control in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter, the City Codes and Codified Ordinances and applicable State laws.~~

B. Tenant/Occupant Duties

1. The occupant(s) shall comply with all obligations imposed unto by this Part and by the City of Reading Codified Ordinances: ~~including, but not limited to, Chapter 2, Animals, Chapter 141, Bicycles, Chapter 5, Code Enforcement, Part 6, Property Maintenance Code, Chapter 180, Conduct, Chapter 10, Health and Safety, Chapter 431, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 20, Solid Waste, and Chapter 21, Streets and Sidewalks, as well as all State laws and regulations.~~
2. The occupant(s) shall conduct themselves and require other persons including, but not limited to, guests on the premises and within their ~~rental unit~~ **control** with their consent, to conduct themselves in a manner that will not disturb the peaceful enjoyment of the premises by others and that will not disturb the peaceful enjoyment of adjacent or nearby ~~dwellings~~ **properties** by people occupying the same.
3. The occupant(s) shall not engage in, nor tolerate, nor permit others on the premise to cause damage to the ~~rental unit~~ **property** or engage in disruptive conduct, or other violations of this Part, City Codes or applicable State laws.
4. Police officers or public officers shall investigate alleged incidents of disruptive conduct. They shall complete a disruptive conduct report upon a finding that the reported incident constitutes disruptive conduct as defined herein. The information

filed in said report shall include, if possible, the identity of the alleged perpetrators of the disruptive conduct and all other obtainable information, including the factual basis for the disruptive conduct described on the prescribed.

§308-114. Owners Jointly and Severally Responsible.

If any regulated dwelling unit or rooming unit is owned by more than one person, in any form of joint tenancy, as a partnership, corporation or ~~otherwise~~ **found to have an equitable interest**, each person shall be jointly and severally responsible for the duties imposed under the terms of this Part and shall be severally subject to prosecution for the violation of this Part.

§308-115 - Fees for Housing Permits Registration, Surcharges and Administrative Fees

A. Fee Schedule

Fees required for an application for, and annual renewal of, a Housing ~~Permit~~ **Registration**, as well as inspection-related and other applicable fees shall be established by City Council and included on the City's fee schedule.

B. Waiver of Fees

The ~~permit~~ **registration** fees established in subsection ~~(1)~~ **A** above shall be waived if the owner, ~~or the spouse or son, daughter, mother, father, sister or brother~~ **family member** of the owner occupy a single family property.

C. Prosecution of Violation.

Notwithstanding the above, nothing will prevent the Property Maintenance Division from commencing a summary offense criminal action via the issuance of a non-traffic citation for sections of Chapter 308 in accord with the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure in the court of appropriate jurisdiction and the violations shall be deemed a strict liability offense.

D. Collections

All delinquent fees under this part shall be turned over to a Collections Agency and are subject to collection costs.

§308-116. Reserved

§308-117. Official Notices.

All official notices, ~~excluding notice of inspection, including, but not limited to, notices of violation relating to a dwelling unit or rooming unit shall be mailed to or personally served on the owner. All official notices, excluding notice of inspection which shall be in the manner set forth herein,~~ shall be **delivered** by first class mail to the address of record of the owner and ~~posting of the dwelling unit or rooming unit.~~ The address of record of the owner shall be that provided to the Property Maintenance Division and in the absence of the same the address provided by the County of Berks. Any owner change of address must be ~~performed through the County of Berks Assessment Office~~ **comply with §308-107**. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that any notice required to be given under this Part shall have been received by owner if the notice was given in the manner provided. A claim of lack of knowledge by the owner of any violation hereunder or City of Reading Codes shall not be a defense to license nonrenewal, suspension or revocation proceedings as long as all notices prerequisite to institution of such action were given and deemed received in accord with the applicable provisions of this Part.

§308-118. Placarding and Condemnation

The City of Reading Property Maintenance Division is hereby authorized to placard and condemn thereby requiring the immediate vacation, or within the discretion of the Property Maintenance Division, vacation within a specific and reasonable amount of time for vacation of a property that is being rented and for which a Housing **Permit Registration** has not been ~~obtained~~ **filed** or for which an inspection has not been ~~or performed completed~~ **complied** by the Property Maintenance Division as required by Section ~~1098-108~~ of this Chapter.

§ 308-119. Review and Appeals

1. ~~Administrative Appeal Review and Appeals~~

a. ~~Except as provided in §308-112 Failure to Obtain~~ **Apply for** Housing Permit **Registration**, any person who is aggrieved by this Ordinance may appeal to the Director of Community Development or his/her designee by submitting a request for appeal in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of determination by the Property Maintenance Office.

b. The appeal hearing will be held before the Director of Community Development or his or her designee. The Administrator ~~Director~~ or his/her designee may uphold the appeal, deny the appeal or may modify the determination by the Property Maintenance Office as he/she sees appropriate.

A. *A property owner may make a written request to the Director of the Department of Community Development within fifteen (15) calendar days for review of any fees or surcharges (including the calculation thereof) imposed upon a finding of non-compliance. The Director of Community Development, or his designee, shall conduct said review and issue a written determination.*

B. *If a property owner feels aggrieved by a review finding, the property owner must make a written request within fifteen (15) days of the date of the determination to the Director of Community Development for a de novo appeal to challenge or dispute a finding of non-compliance and/or the calculation of any fees or surcharges imposed as a result thereof. The request shall be accompanied by a deposit as per the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212 as security for the payment of costs in the event findings and calculations by the Property Maintenance Division is affirmed. The appeal shall be conducted by the Code and License Appeals Board as per the applicable ordinance. The unexcused failure of the owner to appear for said appeal will result in the denial and dismissal of the challenge or dispute. The cost of the appeal shall be borne by the City in the event the findings and calculations by City personnel are not fully affirmed.*

2. Subsequent Appeals

Any subsequent appeal filed under this Ordinance, ~~including a subsequent appeal to §308-112, Failure to Obtain Apply for Housing Permit Registration,~~ shall be filed to the Berks County Court of Common Pleas pursuant to 2 Pa.C.S. §751 and §752.

PART II.

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT

EXHIBIT A

PART B. Disruptive Conduct

§ 308-130. Definitions.

As used in this subpart, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

CODE AND LICENSE APPEALS BOARD - *Board authorized to hear, among other things, appeals of and render decisions in matters concerning Disruptive Conduct Reports.*

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT—Any form of conduct, action, incident or behavior perpetrated, caused or permitted by any occupant or visitor of a housing unit that is so loud, untimely (as to hour of the day), offensive, riotous, or that otherwise disturbs other persons of

reasonable sensibility in their peaceful enjoyment of their premises, or causes damage to said premises such that a report is made to a police officer and/or a public officer complaining of such conduct, action, incident, or behavior, with the exception of domestic abuse or domestic violence, as per Pa. Title 23 Domestic Relations, Chapter 61 and as defined herein. Exemptions may also include circumstances relating to familial status or disabilities. It is not necessary that such conduct, action, incident or behavior constitutes a criminal offense, nor that criminal charges be filed against any person in order for said person to have perpetrated, caused or permitted the commission of disruptive conduct, as defined herein. Provided, however, that no disruptive conduct shall be deemed to have occurred unless a public officer or a police officer shall investigate and make a determination that such did occur, and keep written records, including a disruptive conduct report, of such occurrences. The occupant and the owner, operator, responsible agent or manager shall be notified of any such occurrences, in writing.

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT REPORT — — A written report of disruptive conduct on a form to be prescribed therefore to be completed by a police officer or a public officer, as the case may be, who actually investigates an alleged incident of disruptive conduct and which shall be maintained by the Department of Police and Property Maintenance Division.

DOMESTIC ABUSE (OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE) is defined as a pattern of abusive or harmful behavior within the confines of an intimate relationship. Domestic abuse generally occurs between people who do or do not share a home - such as a husband and wife, boyfriend and girlfriend, parent and child, estranged spouses, etc. Some examples of domestic abuse include but are not limited to the following:

- Physical abuse (hitting, pushing, kicking, restraining, throwing objects or otherwise touching another with unwanted physical aggression)
- Verbal abuse (using derogatory or emotionally hurtful language with the intent to invoke fear or lower self-esteem)
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Intimidation
- Threatening
- Stalking

TWELVE (12) MONTH PERIOD — — For purposes of this subpart, twelve-month period shall be calculated by counting 12 months back from the most recent disruptive conduct report.

§ 308-131. Investigation and report; suspension and/or revocation of housing permit. Police officers or public officers shall investigate alleged incidents of disruptive conduct. They shall complete a disruptive conduct form upon a finding that the reported incident constitutes disruptive conduct as defined herein. The information filed in said form shall

include the identity of the alleged perpetrators of the disruptive conduct and all other obtainable information, including the factual basis for the disruptive conduct described on the prescribed form. A copy of the disruptive conduct form will be provided to the occupant. If the finding is considered valid by the Reading Police Department, a copy of the disruptive conduct report shall be mailed to the occupant and mailed to the owner within 15 working days of the date the form is issued to the occupant.

- A. Eviction. After two disruptive conduct incidents in any twelve-month period by an occupant documented by disruptive conduct reports, the owner shall have 10 working days from the date of the written notice to begin eviction proceedings against the occupant(s) or pursue an appeal. This subsection is not intended to limit or inhibit the owner's right to initiate eviction action.
- B. Suspension or revocation of housing permit. Failure of an owner or local authorized Agent to take action required in Subsection A above will result in the commencement of the process to suspend the Housing Permit for the property where the disruptive conduct incident occurred in accordance with/per the process established herein, notwithstanding any other requirements therefor.
- C. Reinstatement of housing permit. The housing unit involved shall not have its Housing Permit reinstated until the applicable reinstatement fee is paid and the disruptive occupants have been evicted, unless the appeal filed by the property owner or occupant has concluded and was approved. Notwithstanding this subsection, if there are violations assessed against the owner per the provisions of this Part which require suspension or revocation, a Housing Permit shall not be reinstated until compliance with the requirements therefor have occurred.
- D. Report against all occupants. The content of the disruptive conduct report shall count against all occupants of the housing unit. The content of the disruptive conduct report shall not count against all occupants of the housing unit if the complaint is initiated by one of the housing unit occupants. More than one disruptive conduct report filed against the occupants of a housing unit in a twenty-four-hour period shall count as a single disruptive conduct report for the purpose of the preceding subsection.
- E. Maintenance of list of disruptive conduct report tenants and occupants and evicted occupants. The Property Maintenance Division shall maintain a list of the names of all occupants and tenants against whom a disruptive conduct report is issued as a result of this Part. The Property Maintenance Division shall also maintain a list of all occupants and tenants evicted as a result of this Part. The names shall remain on the list for a period of five years.

§ 308-132. ~~Housing Board of Appeals~~ Code and License Appeals Board.

- A. Appeals. The occupant and/or owner may appeal the contents of said disruptive conduct report. Additionally, any person aggrieved by the suspension, nonrenewal,

denial or revocation of a Housing Permit **Registration** may appeal. All appeals must be filed, in writing, with the ~~Manager of the Property Maintenance Division~~ Director of the Department of Community Development, with the appropriate filing fee, as per the City of Reading Fee Schedule § 212, within fifteen (15) ~~working~~ **business** days from the date appearing on the disruptive conduct report or notice of suspension, nonrenewal, denial or revocation of a Housing Permit mailed to the occupant or property owner.

B. ~~Organization.~~ ***Enforcement Upon Resolution of Appeal of Code and License Appeals Board***

~~Membership.~~ The Housing Board of Appeals shall be a body of seven (7) members consisting of: the ~~Managing Director or his/her designee who shall serve as Chairperson;~~ a ~~Councilperson or his/her designee who shall also be a Councilperson,~~ ~~Manager of the Property Maintenance Division or his/her designee;~~ the Chief of Police or his/her designee; an owner of a rental **housing** unit(s) in Reading; an occupant of a rental **housing** unit residing in the City of Reading; and a member of a community group recognized by the City of Reading. An attorney from the City Law Department shall serve as the Hearing Master and shall provide legal advice to the Board. ***Upon a successful appeal to the Code and License Appeals Board, that disruptive conduct report will be withdrawn and discounted within that twelve (12) month period. However, once all appeals to the Code and License Appeals Board have been exhausted and a second disruptive conduct report has been confirmed, the public officer shall re-inspect the premises in question fifteen (15) business days from the date of decision to ensure either that the unit is vacant, or that the owner has commenced the eviction process. Failure to comply will result in revocation of the unit's Housing Registration.***

- ~~(1) Alternates.~~ There shall be three alternate members: an owner, an occupant of a housing unit residing in the City of Reading and a member of a community group recognized by the City of Reading.
- ~~(2) Appointment.~~ All members of the Board shall be appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the Council of the City of Reading, with the exception of the Council member, who shall be appointed by the Council President.
- ~~(3) Term.~~ A member or alternate member shall serve a term of not more than three years from the time of appointment or reappointment or until his/her successor shall take office. ~~Members may be appointed to serve successive terms.~~ Members and alternates of the initial board shall be appointed to staggered terms of one, two and three years.

- (4) Powers of designee and alternates. Designees and alternate members may be requested to attend meetings in absence of a regular member and shall have all the powers of a regular member at such meetings.
- (5) Oaths and subpoenas. The Board shall have power to administer oaths and issue subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of relevant documents and papers, including witnesses and documents requested by the parties.
- (6) Quorum and majority vote. Four members shall constitute a quorum of the Board. A majority vote of the members of the quorum of the Board shall prevail. A tie vote shall be deemed as a denial an approval of the appeal.
- (7) Removal of members. Any member may be removed for misconduct or neglect of duty or for other just cause by a majority vote of Council taken after the member has received 15 days advance notice of the intent to take such vote. Failure of a member to attend three consecutive regular meetings of the Board will constitute grounds for immediate removal from the Board by City Council. Failure of a member to attend at least 50% of the regular meetings of the Board in a calendar year will constitute grounds for immediate removal from the Board by City Council. The Chairperson of the Board shall inform the City Clerk in writing when a member has failed to comply with this attendance policy. Following such notification, City Council may vote to remove the member and seek applicants to fill the vacant position.

C. Powers. The Board shall have the following powers:

- (1) Promulgate rules and regulations. To adopt and administer the rules of procedure regarding its organization, officers (except the Chairperson), times and places of meetings, conduct of meetings and other legal procedures relating to the hearing and determination of appeals and other matters within the Board's jurisdiction.
- (2) Hear and decide appeals. To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by the police officer or public officer in the enforcement of the provisions of this Part.
- (3) Grant modification or variance. To modify any notice of violation or order and to authorize a variance from the terms of this code when, because of special circumstances, undue hardship would result from literal enforcement, and where such variance substantially complies with the spirit and intent of the Code.
- (4) Grant extension of time. To grant a reasonable extension of time for the compliance, as described in the City's Property Maintenance Code (Chapter 180, Part 13) and other applicable sections of the Code of the City of Reading of any order where there is a demonstrated case of hardship and evidence of bona fide intent to comply within a reasonable time period.
- (5) Timeliness. In exercising the above mentioned powers, the Board shall act with reasonable promptness and seek to prevent unwarranted delays prejudicial to the party involved and to the public interest; provided, however, that and the Board

shall file its decision no later than within 15 working days after the date of the appeal hearing.

- (6) Oaths and subpoenas. The Board shall have power to administer oaths and issue subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of relevant documents and papers, including witnesses and documents requested by parties.
- (7) Authority. The Board may reverse or affirm wholly or partly, or may modify the order, requirement, decision or determination appealed from and may make such order, requirement, decision or determination as justice would require, and, to that end, shall have all the powers of the police officer or public officer; provided, however, that the Housing Board of Appeals, in its determination, shall be bound by this Part and shall not ignore the clear provisions and intent of this Part.
- D. Effect of appeals. Any decision or order issued under, per and in accord with this Part shall be held in abeyance upon the timely filing of an appeal thereof with the Housing Board of Appeals Code and License Appeals Board. Said abeyance shall include, but not be limited to, revocation, suspension, denial or nonrenewal of a Housing Permit until the appeal is resolved. An appeal of the two disruptive conduct reports within a twelve month period shall stop the eviction proceedings against the occupants until the appeal is resolved, only if the eviction proceedings were a direct result of the second disruptive conduct report.
- E. Enforcement upon resolution of appeal of Housing Board. If this appeal is of a second disruptive conduct report and the decision of the police officer or public officer has been affirmed, within 10 ~~15~~ working days and time for compliance as required by the decision of the Housing Board of Appeals, the public officer shall re-inspect to determine compliance as to whether the occupant has voluntarily moved from the premises or the owner has initiated eviction proceedings. If, when so required by a second disruptive conduct report, the occupant has not voluntarily moved or the owner has not initiated eviction proceedings, and for compliance as required by the decision of the Board has expired, the public officer shall institute the revocation of the Housing Permit pursuant to the provisions set forth in this Part. Upon a successful appeal to the Housing Board, that disruptive conduct report will be withdrawn and discounted within that twelve (12) month period. However, once all appeals to the Housing Board have been exhausted and a second disruptive conduct report has been confirmed, the public officer shall re-inspect the premises in question 15 business days from the date of decision to ensure either that the unit is vacant, or that the owner has commenced the eviction process. Failure to comply will result in revocation of the unit's Housing Permit.

§ 308-133. Appeal to Court of Common Pleas Proper Jurisdiction.

Once a DCR is issued, any person aggrieved by any decision of the ~~Housing Board of Appeals Code and License Appeals Board~~, may immediately appeal to the Court of Common Pleas of Berks County, or a court of proper jurisdiction. Such appeal shall be made by a duly verified petition in accordance with the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure and shall set forth the factual and legal basis upon which the decision of the Board is alleged to be incorrect or illegal, in whole or in part. A timely petition filed with the Court shall be

served upon all parties before the ~~Housing Board of Appeals~~ *Code and License Appeals Board*, including the Board and City of Reading, at the time of its filing and shall stay enforcement of the Board's decision. A successful appeal to the Court shall rescind all prior disruptive conduct reports issued within a twelve (12) month period.

§ 308-134. Share information.

The City of Reading Property Maintenance Division is authorized to share any and all information obtained under this code with the other departments and divisions of the City of Reading.

§ 308-135. Compliance with other City of Reading ordinances.

Every owner of every dwelling, in addition to the provisions set forth herein, shall comply with ~~the provisions (sections) of all other applicable City ordinances including, but not limited to, the international/City of Reading Building Code (Chapter 180, Part 8), Existing Building Code (Chapter 180, Part 5), Plumbing Code (Chapter 180, Part 9), Mechanical Code (Chapter 180, Part 6) Electrical Code (Chapter 180, Part 7), Fire Code (Chapter 180, Part 14), and Residential Code (Chapter 180, Part 4), Property Maintenance Code (Chapter 180, Part 13) Solid Waste and Recycling Ordinance (Chapter 496, Part 1 and 2) Health Code (Chapter 288, Part 1), and Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 600)~~ *any state or local code or ordinance adopted, enacted or in effect in and for the City of Reading.*

PART III

~~VANCAT~~ ABANDONED PROPERTY REGISTRATION

§308-301. DEFINITIONS.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning.

ABANDONED REAL PROPERTY - any real property located in the City, whether vacant or occupied, that is in default on a mortgage, has had a lis pendens filed against it by the ~~Lender~~ *Mortgagee* holding a mortgage on the property, is subject to an ongoing foreclosure action by the ~~Lender~~ *Mortgagee* or, is subject to an application for a tax deed or pending tax assessors lien sale, or has been transferred to the ~~Lender~~ *Mortgagee* under a deed in lieu of foreclosure. The designation of a property as "abandoned" shall remain in place until such time as the property is sold or transferred to a new owner, the foreclosure action has been dismissed and any default on the mortgage has been cured.

~~**ACCESSIBLE PROPERTY/ STRUCTURE**~~ — a property that is accessible through a ~~comprised/breached gate, fence, wall, etc. or a structure that is unsecured and/or breached in such a way as to allow access to the interior space by unauthorized persons.~~

APPLICABLE CODES - to include, but not be limited to, the City's Codified Ordinances ("City Code") and the Pennsylvania Building Code.

BLIGHTED PROPERTY—includes but is not limited to:

- 1) Properties that have broken or severely damaged windows, doors, walls, or roofs which create hazardous conditions and encourage trespassing; or
- 2) Properties whose maintenance is not in conformance with the maintenance of other neighboring properties causing a decrease in value of the neighboring properties; or
- 3) Properties cited for a public nuisance pursuant to the City Code; or
- 4) Properties that endanger the public's health, safety, or welfare because the properties or improvements thereon are dilapidated, deteriorated, or violate minimum health and safety standards or lacks maintenance as required by the City and Zoning Codes.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER - any law enforcement officer, building official, zoning inspector, code enforcement officer, fire inspector or building inspector, or other person authorized by the City to enforce the applicable code(s).

MORTGAGEE – *The Lender in a Mortgage.*

OWNER—any person, legal entity or other party having any ownership interest whether legal or equitable, in real property. This term shall also apply to any person, legal entity or agent responsible for the construction, maintenance or operation of the property involved.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY—a local property manager, property maintenance company or similar entity responsible for the maintenance of abandoned real property.

VACANT - any building or structure that is not legally occupied.

§308-302. ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGISTRY

Pursuant to the provisions of this Part, the City or designee shall establish a registry cataloging each Abandoned Property within the City, containing the information required within.

§308-303. REGISTRATION OF ABANDONED REAL PROPERTY

- A. Any mortgagee who holds a mortgage on real property located within the City of Reading shall perform an inspection of the property to determine vacancy or occupancy, upon default by the mortgagor. The mortgagee shall within ten (10) days of the inspection, register the property with the City's Property Maintenance Department.

nance Division on forms or website access provided by the City, and indicate whether the property is vacant or occupied. A separate registration is required for each property, whether it is found to be vacant or occupied.

- B. If the property is occupied but remains in default, it shall be inspected by the mortgagee or his designee monthly until (1) the mortgagor or other party remedies the default, or (2) it is found to be vacant or shows evidence of vacancy at which time it is deemed abandoned, and the mortgagee shall, within ten (10) days of that inspection, update the property registration to a vacancy status on forms *or website address* provided by the City.
- C. Registration pursuant to this section shall contain the name of the mortgagee and the server, the direct mailing address of the mortgagee and the server, a direct contact name and telephone number for both parties, facsimile number and e-mail address for both parties, the folio or tax number, and the name and twenty-four (24) hour contact phone number of the property management company responsible for the security and maintenance of the property.
- D. A non-refundable annual registration fee shall be assessed as per the City of Reading Fee Schedule §212 and shall accompany the registration form or website registration.
- E. All registration fees must be paid directly from the Mortgagee, Servicer, Trustee, or Owner. Third Party Registration fees are not allowed without the consent of the City and/or its authorized designee.
- F. This section shall also apply to properties that have been the subject of a foreclosure sale where the title was transferred to the beneficiary of a mortgage involved in the foreclosure and any properties transferred under a deed in lieu of foreclosure/sale.
- G. Properties subject to this ~~section~~ *Part* shall remain under the annual registration requirements *of this section*; and the inspection, security and maintenance standards *requirements* of this section ~~as long as they remain vacant or in default~~ *ordinance*.
- H. Any person or legal entity that has registered a property under this section must report any change of information contained in the registration within ten (10) days of the change.
- I. Failure of the mortgagee and/or owner to properly register or to modify the registration form from time to time to reflect a change of circumstances as required by this Part is a violation of this Part and shall be subject to enforcement.

- J. Pursuant to any administrative or judicial finding and determination that any property is in violation of this Part, the City may take the necessary action to ensure compliance **as per this ordinance** ~~with and place a lien on the property for the cost of the work performed to benefit the property and bring it into compliance.~~

§308-304. MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

All abandoned real properties are subject to the requirements contained within the City's Property Maintenance Ordinance.

§308-305. INSPECTIONS FOR VIOLATIONS

Adherence to this ~~article~~ **Part** does not relieve any person, legal entity or agent from any other obligations set forth in any applicable code(s), which may apply to the property. ~~Upon sale or transfer of title to the property, the owner shall be responsible for all violations of the applicable code(s) and the owner shall be responsible for meeting with the City's Property Maintenance Division for a Health and Safety Inspection.~~