



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REPORT OF FINDINGS

Date: June 1, 2026

Case No.: PZC-02-26

Applicant: Wheatland Tube LLC

Address: 1600 Ritchie Court, Rochelle, IL Parcel # 25-32-201-001

Narrative:

The petitioner is seeking a variance of Section 104.11 of the 2021 International Building Code as amended and adopted by the City of Rochelle. Section 104.11 of the 2021 IBC reads as follows:

“[A] 104.11 Alternative materials, design and methods of construction and equipment.

The provisions of this code are not intended to prevent the installation of any material or to prohibit any design or method of construction not specifically prescribed by this code, provided that any such alternative has been approved. An alternative material design method of construction shall be approved when the Building Official finds that the proposed alternative meets all of the following:

1. The alternative material, design or method of construction is satisfactory and complies with the intended provisions of this code,
2. The material, method or work offered is, for the purpose intended, not less than the equivalent of that prescribed in this code as it pertains to the following:
 - 2.1. Quality.
 - 2.2. Strength
 - 2.3. Effectiveness.
 - 2.4. Fire Resistance.
 - 2.5. Durability.
 - 2.6. Safety.

Where the alternative material, design or method of construction is not approved, the Building Official shall respond in writing, stating the reasons why the alternative was not approved.” The variance request is to replace “the Building Official” as it appears in Section 104.11 with “the City Council”. The purpose for request for a variance is to allow the petitioner to construct a proposed 33,000 square foot fabric-covered hoop structure. The fully enclosed structure will be forty-eight (48) feet tall, one hundred ten (110) feet wide, and two hundred ninety one and one half foot (291.5) long. The intended use of the proposed fabric building is a drive-through loading area for trucks to load finished goods. The operation runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with approximately 50 employees working in this area across 3 shifts. The property is zoned I2, General Industry and is 34.9 acres.

Sec. 110-29. – Variances.

(a) Intent and purpose. A variance is a grant of relief to a property owner from the literal requirements of the zoning ordinance, where literal enforcement would cause undue hardship. Additionally, a variance is intended to provide relief where the requirements of the zoning ordinance render the land difficult to use because of some unique physical attribute of the property itself, or some other factor unique to the property for which the variance is requested.



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION REPORT OF FINDINGS

A variance is not intended merely to remove an inconvenience or financial burden that the requirements of the zoning ordinance may impose on a property owner in general.

A variance is not intended to allow the establishment of a use that is not otherwise allowed in a zoning district or that would change the zoning district classification of any or all of the affected property, and should not be granted where a special use permit or an amendment to the official zoning map would be more appropriate.

(f) Standards for a granting a variance. The planning and zoning commission shall not recommend, and the city council shall not grant, a variance from the regulations of the zoning ordinance unless it makes findings based on evidence presented to it in each specific case that:

- (1) The variance is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance;
- (2) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances (65 ILCS 5/11-13-4) and thus strict enforcement of the zoning ordinance would result in practical difficulties, or impose exceptional hardships, due to the special and unusual conditions that are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district;
- (3) The property cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted only under the conditions allowed by the zoning ordinance; and
- (4) The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality, and will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.

(g) Burden of proof. In each case of a requested variance, the applicant must satisfy the proof that the proposed variance meets the standards of subsection (f) of this section, even if there is no testimony or other evidence opposing or rebutting the requested variance.

The petitioner explains their practical difficulties or exceptional hardships by stating: "If the proposed 33,000 square foot structure adhered to the strict application of the codes referenced, the structure would then significantly hinder the facility's ability to grow, shrink, and adapt to the frequently changing needs of the operation of the facility. A structure conforming to a traditional prescriptive construction type as defined in Section 602 of the IBC would result in an unwise allocation of very limited resources given the intended use of the proposed fabric-covered hoop structure. The fabric-covered hoop building adheres to the requirements set forth by section 104.11 of the IBC for alternative materials, design and methods of construction and equipment therefore a hardship is created if the proposed building were required to adhere to strict application of the reference sections even though the building meets the required design standards. Practical difficulties that would be experienced from strict application of the referenced codes include vastly increased facility downtime due to construction duration and material lead times."

The petitioner provided structural design which met the required 30 pound snow load, anchoring and additional requirements set forth by the code.

After a duly noticed public hearing, the City of Rochelle Planning & Zoning Commission will consider all the relevant evidence presented at said hearing on June 1, 2026.



PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REPORT OF FINDINGS

Staff recommends:

Staff is presenting the variance request for a fabric-covered hoop structure located at 1600 Ritchie Court.

Findings:

- 1. Is the proposed variance in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance?
2. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances and thus strict enforcement of the zoning ordinance would result in practical difficulties, or impose exceptional hardships, due to the special and unusual conditions that are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district?
3. The property cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted only under the conditions allowed by the zoning ordinance?
4. Is the proposed variance detrimental or dangerous to public health?
5. Will the proposed variance impair property value in the neighborhood?
6. Will the proposed variance impede the normal development of the surrounding properties?
7. Will the proposed variance: (a) impair light and air to adjacent property; (b) congest public streets; (c) increase the risk of fire; (d) substantially diminish property values within the vicinity; or (e) endanger the public health?

Recommendation:

Based on the findings above, the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby recommends to the Rochelle City Council that:

That the Petitioner be granted a variance for the Subject Property, without conditions other than the other applicable requirements of the Rochelle Municipal Code.



**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REPORT OF FINDINGS**

_____ That the Petitioner be granted a variance for the Subject Property, with the following conditions attached thereto, in addition to the requirements of the Rochelle Municipal Code:

_____ That the Petitioner be denied a variance for the Subject Property. If Findings 1-3 are all affirmative, and Findings 4-7 are all negative, the Planning and Zoning Commission explains as follows:
