

STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 9, 2026
TO: Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Helen Miller, Planner
RE: Petition Number: 2026-16 and 2026-17
Applicant: Menard, Inc.
Status of Applicant: Property Owner
Location: 2450 W. Jefferson Street (Council District #5)
Request: 2026-16: A Special Use Permit to allow a self-storage facility
2026-17: Variation from the Non-Residential Design Standards to allow engineered wood siding in the I-1 (light industrial) zoning district

Purpose

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to allow a self-storage facility in the I-1 (light industrial) zoning district at 2450 W. Jefferson Street. Per the City of Joliet Zoning Ordinance, self-storage facilities may be allowed as special uses in the I-1 district by the Mayor and City Council, with the advice of the Zoning Board of Appeals in accordance with Section 47-5.2.

The applicant is also requesting a Variation from the Non-Residential Design Standards to allow engineered wood siding as an exterior material for new buildings within the I-1 district. Per section 47-15H of the Zoning Ordinance, exterior walls in industrial districts shall be constructed with institutional quality masonry materials, including but not limited to precast concrete panels. The exterior walls of the proposed storage buildings will be sided with LP SmartSide, a textured engineered wood siding.

Site Specific Information

The 2.8-acre subject site is zoned I-1 (light industrial) and contains a vacant commercial building and extensive surface parking. The building was occupied by Bookie Magee's Hideaway and OTB since its construction in 2004 until the business relocated in 2022. The building has been unoccupied since then.

The site is Lot 16 of the Menard's / Joliet Subdivision that was approved and recorded in 2003. The lot is located behind the Menards and Walmart sites and does not have frontage on a public street. The subdivision contains ingress and egress easements along the interior roads to allow traffic circulation throughout the subdivision. The Secretary of

State DMV facility is located on the lot to the east, and a detention pond for the subdivision is located on the lot to the west. Menard, Inc. is the owner of the subject site as well as the DMV lot, the detention lot, and the Menards store site.

Surrounding Zoning, Land Use and Character

- North: I-1 (light industrial), commercial (Menards; Walmart Supercenter)
- South: R-4 (multi-family residential), residential (Fairway Estates Condos)
- East: I-1 (light industrial), commercial (Secretary of State - DMV facility)
- West: I-1 (light industrial), detention pond

Applicable Regulations

- Section 47-14.2A(G) Special Uses – All Industrial Districts
- Section 57-15H.4 Non-Residential Design Standards
- Section 47-5.2(C) Criteria for issuance of a Special Use Permit
(refer to attachment)
- Section 47-19.8 Findings of Fact Supporting a Variation
(refer to attachment)

Discussion

The petitioner, Menard, Inc., is requesting approval of a Special Use Permit to allow a Menards self-storage facility at 2450 W. Jefferson Street. The storage facility would be owned and operated by Menard, Inc. In recent years, the company began establishing self-storage facilities next to or near existing Menards home improvement stores. There are currently around 25 of these facilities operating in the Midwest. The storage sites are an extension of the store operations and are managed by the local Menards employees, with support from the Menards general office in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The proposed self-storage facility would contain around 92 climate-controlled units within the existing building and around 174 non-climate-controlled units in several proposed buildings located around the site. The new storage buildings would be constructed along the perimeter of the site and within the existing parking lot footprint. The proposed buildings would be 11 feet or 12 feet tall measured to the top of the roof. The interior of the existing building would be remodeled for the climate-controlled units; the exterior of the building will not be significantly modified. The site would be accessed by a gated entry with overhead doors, located at the northwest corner of the site (see the north elevation on the attached site plan). The door would be controlled by a PIN pad so that only users with a private access code could enter the site. The storage facility would be overseen by employees of the adjacent Menards store, who would check on the site daily and be available for other issues during store hours. The storage facility would be available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week for renters of the units. The facility would have security cameras throughout in addition to the secure access gate. The site would

be entirely enclosed, with fencing installed between the perimeter buildings and connected to the existing south fence at the southwest and southeast corners of the site. The proposal will be required to follow all Zoning Ordinance and building code requirements, including those for lighting, paving, and emergency access.

The proposed storage buildings would be constructed with gray engineered wood siding and red steel roof panels. The petitioner is requesting a Variation from the Zoning Ordinance's Non-Residential Design Standards to allow exterior siding that is not a masonry material in the I-1 (light industrial) district. Engineered wood siding is allowed as a subsidiary material in the B-1 (neighborhood business) and B-3 (general business) districts. This site is located adjacent to commercial uses as well as a residential subdivision, not within a typical light industrial area. Therefore, staff finds that the requested materials are more appropriate than those required in the Zoning Ordinance for industrial properties.

The site will have perimeter landscaping on all sides. The existing 15-foot landscape area and 6-foot fence along the south property line, adjacent to the residential subdivision, will remain. There is also an existing landscape area along the west, next to the detention area, that will remain. Additional perimeter landscaping would be installed along the north and east sides.

There are twelve north-south rows of parking between the existing building on the subject site and the DMV facility to the east. The subject site contains eight of these rows, while four rows are located on the DMV lot. There is currently no physical distinction between these parking areas for the two lots, so they act as shared parking. The petitioner proposes to leave two existing rows of parking on the east side of the subject site for continued use by users of the DMV facility. If the special use permit is approved, the petitioner will be required, as part of their development plans, to record an access easement over this portion of the self-storage lot to allow use by the DMV lot. Passenger vehicle parking for users of the self-storage facility would be located along the sides of the main building on the interior of the facility.

Recommended Action

Staff finds that the special use request meets the attached criteria for special uses. The establishment and operation of the proposed use will not be detrimental to public health nor be injurious to the use of other property in the immediate vicinity. Additionally, the proposed use will not impede development of surrounding property. The site was constructed as a commercial property within a commercial subdivision, and the proposed use is in character with the existing uses in the subdivision. The storage facility will be fully enclosed and only accessible by a secure gate. The site contains a 15-foot landscape buffer and solid 6-foot fence along the south side, which is the Zoning Ordinance requirement for commercial uses adjacent to residential properties.

Staff also finds that adequate drainage and utilities are provided to the site, as it is an existing lot within a developed subdivision. Adequate ingress and egress are also provided via the interior private roads within the subdivision.

While staff does not find a hardship for the variation request for exterior materials, staff believes the requested materials are more compatible with the surrounding properties than the type of masonry materials required in industrial districts. Staff finds that the proposed materials will not alter the essential character of the area.

Approval of the requested petitions will allow the reuse of a vacant site as a Menards self-storage facility adjacent to an existing Menards home improvement store. The subject site is in a low-profile location that may not be attractive to other commercial uses that require street frontage for visibility.

Conditions

If the Zoning Board desires to approve this Special Use Permit to allow a self-storage facility and a Variation from the Non-Residential Design Standards to allow engineered wood siding in the I-1 (light industrial) zoning district at 2450 W. Jefferson Street, staff recommends that the following conditions would be included:

1. That the Special Use granted shall herein terminate and lapse unless a building permit or certificate of occupancy is obtained not later than 180 days of the effective date of this ordinance and the erection or alteration of a building is started or the use is commenced within such period. The Board may grant an extension of this period, valid for no more than one hundred and eighty (180) additional days, upon written application and good cause shown without notice or hearing. Whether or not there is an intention to abandon the Special Use, if any special use is discontinued for a continuous period of one year, or if an intent to abandon the Special Use is evident in a shorter period of time, the Special Use for such use shall become void, and such use shall not thereafter be reestablished unless a new Special Use Permit is obtained; and
2. Should the property be declared a public nuisance, it may be subject to a rehearing and a possible revocation of the Special Use Permit.

Figure 1: Aerial view of subject site at 2450 W. Jefferson Street (2025)



Figure 2: Subject site and adjacent DMV lot, with shared parking in between (2025)

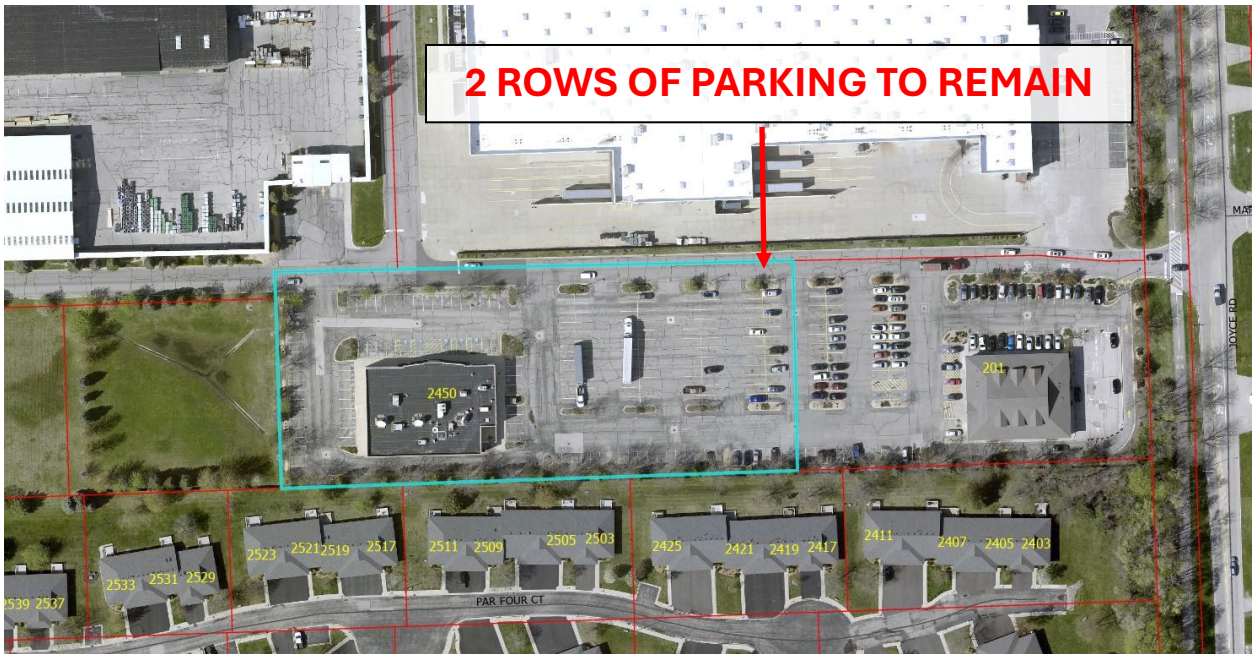


Figure 3: Existing building on subject site, view southeast from corner of site (April 2026)



Figure 4: Existing building on subject site, view southwest from interior road along north of site (April 2026)



Figure 5: Existing landscaping along west side of site adjacent to the detention lot (April 2026)



Figure 6: Existing landscape area and fence along south property line behind existing building, view looking southeast (April 2026)



Figure 7: Surface parking on the east side of the site, view southwest near the corner of the site (April 2026)

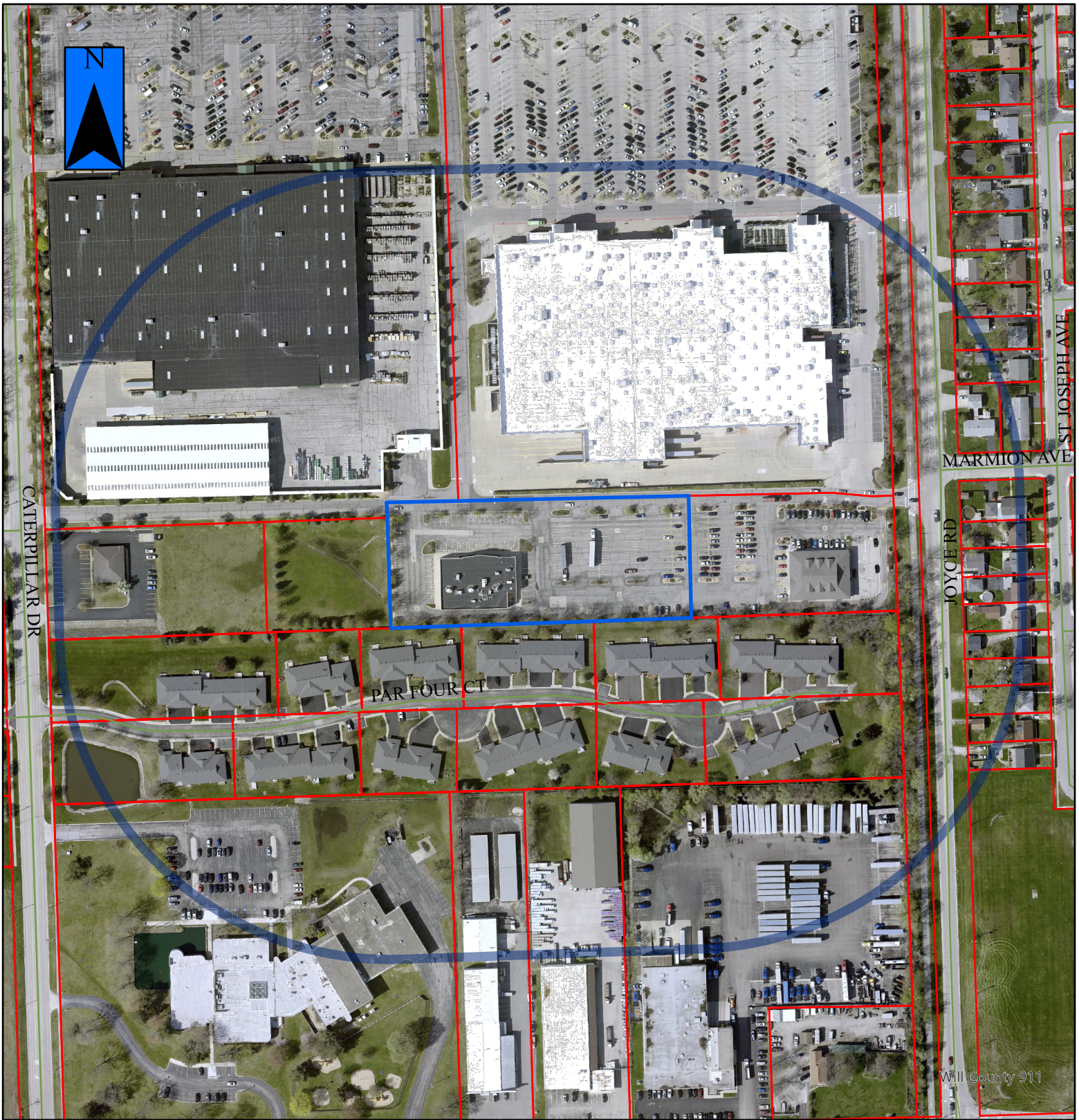


Figure 8: Examples of other existing Menards self-storage facilities; note that materials shown may not be the same as requested at the subject site



Figure 8 continued: Examples of other existing Menards self-storage facilities; note that materials shown may not be the same as requested at the subject site

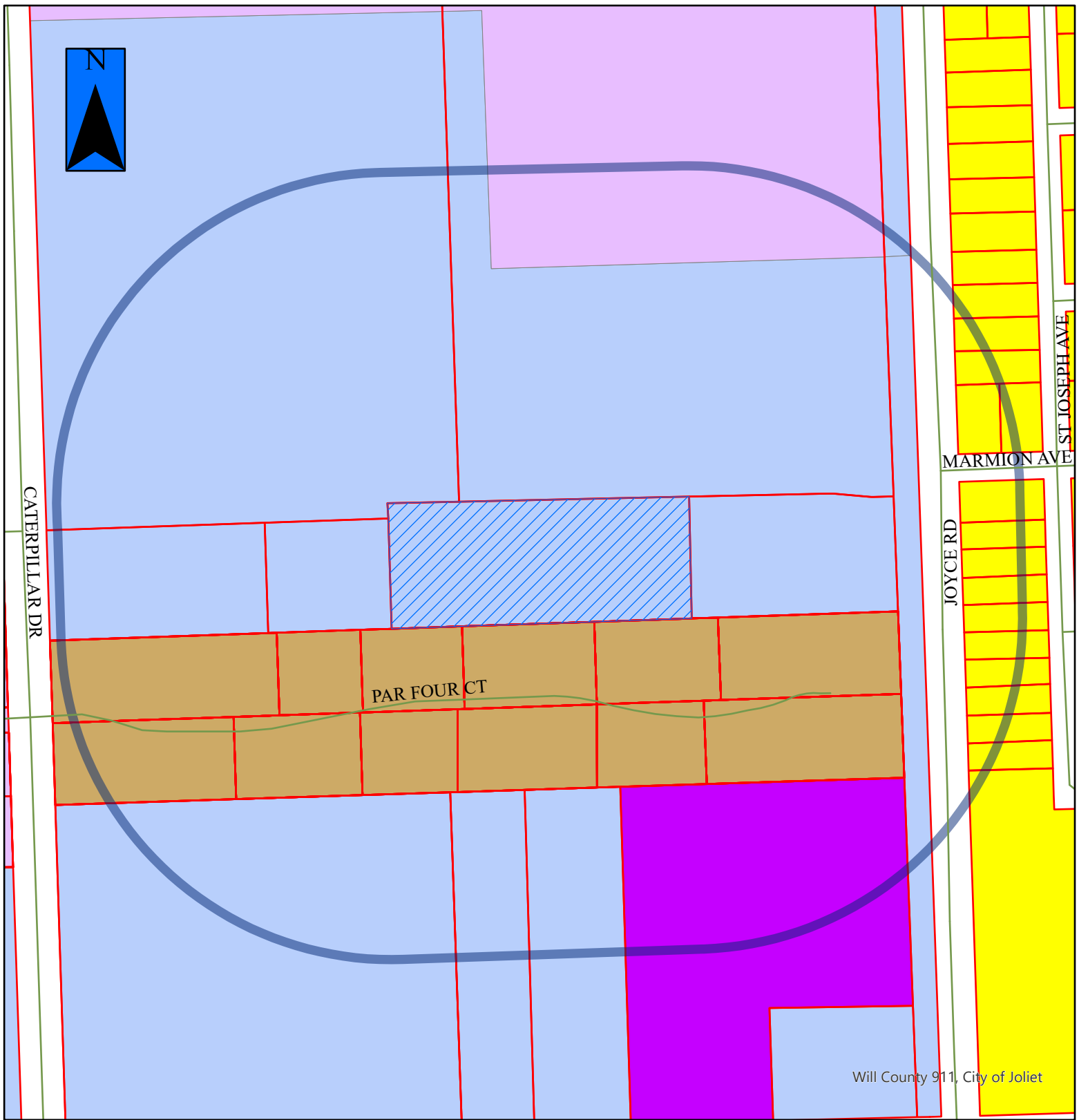




2026-16a, 2026-17a













- = Property in Question / Propiedad en cuestión
- = 600' Public Notification Boundary / Límite de notificación pública de 600 ft (180 m)



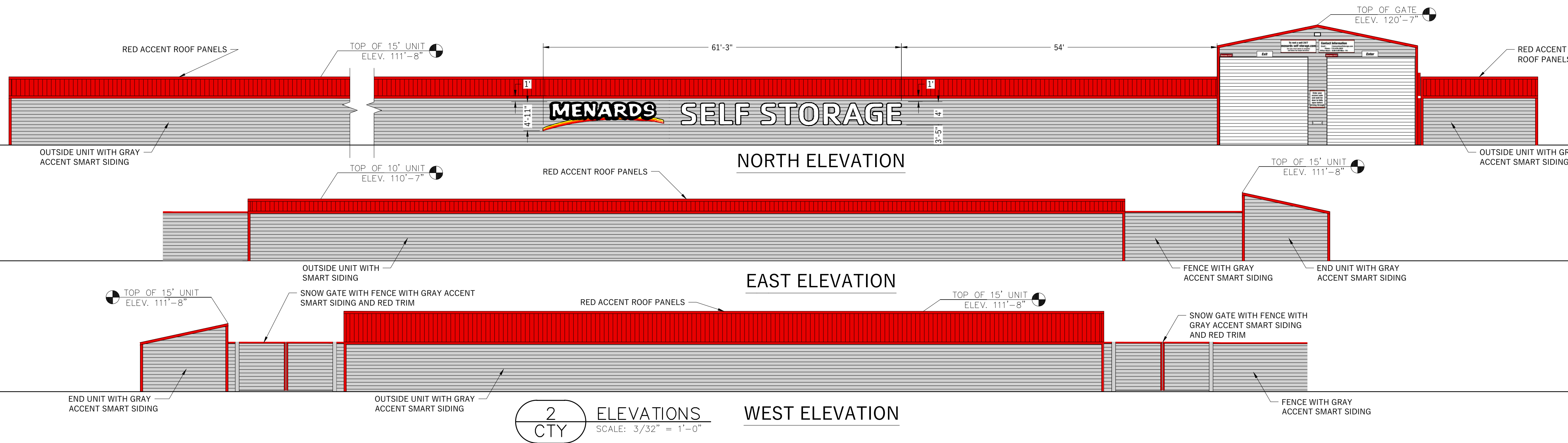
2026-16, 2026-17



 = Property in Question
 = 600' Public Notification Boundary

Legend					
	B-1		I-TA		R-2
	B-2		I-TB		R-2A
	B-3		I-TC		R-3
	I-1		R-1		R-4
	I-2		R-1A		R-5
	I-T		R-1B		R-B

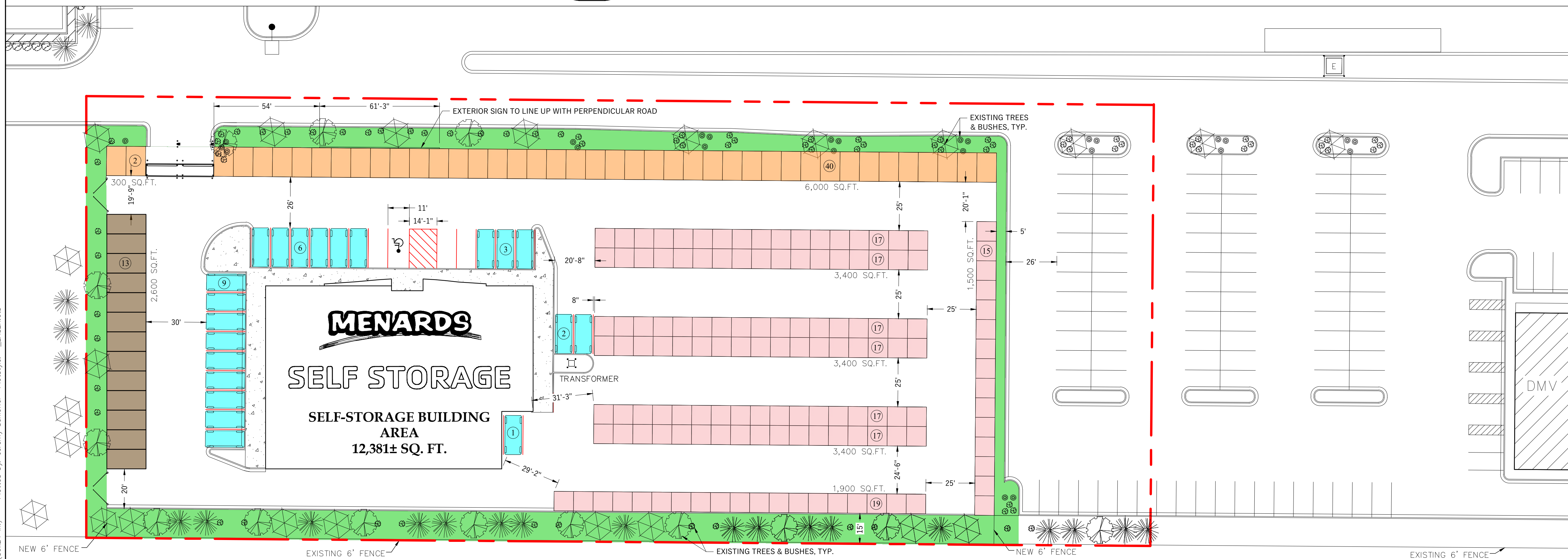
PROJECT TITLE	BY		
SELF STORAGE JOLIET, IL -			
SELF STORAGE LOT AREA			
CITY PLAN			
REVISIONS	NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION



2
CTY

ELEVATIONS
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

WEST ELEVATION

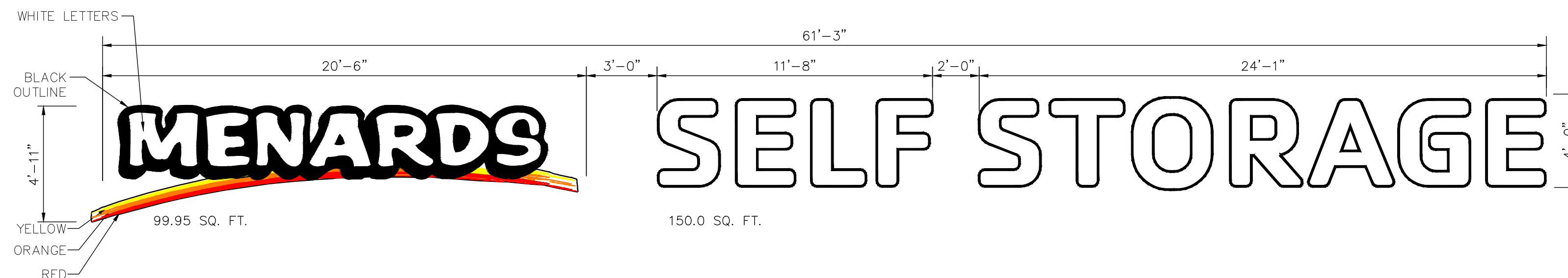


1
CTY

SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 30'

JOLIET, IL
SELF-STORAGE LOT AREA
100,510± SQ. FT.
2.30± ACRES

STORAGE BUILDING AREA
EXISTING BUILDING:
12,381± SQ. FT./28 ACRES
NEW OUTSIDE BUILDINGS:
22,500± SQ. FT./51± ACRES
TOTAL: 34,881± SQ. FT./78 ACRES



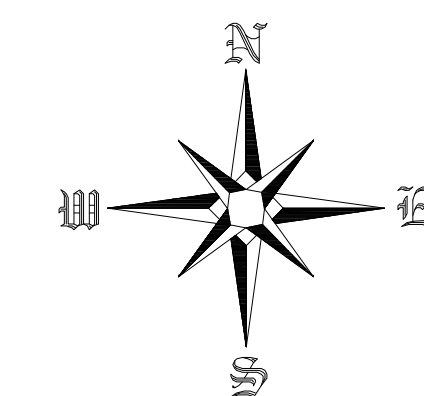
3
CTY

SIGN DETAILS
SCALE: N.T.S.



4
CTY

PRIVACY FENCE PHOTO
SCALE: N.T.S.



PERMANENT INDEX NUMBER (TAX NO. OR P. I. N.): 05-06-13-204-045-0000 ;
_____ ; _____ ; _____

Property Index Number/P.I.N. can be found on tax bill or Will County Supervisor of Assessments website
LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (attached copy preferred):

LOT SIZE: WIDTH: _____ DEPTH: _____ AREA : 2.82 acres

PRESENT USE(S) OF PROPERTY: Vacant (Former OTB)

PRESENT ZONING OF PROPERTY: I-1 Light Industrial

SPECIAL USE REQUESTED: Use of the property as a self storage facility.

The Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to grant a special use permit provided the applicant establishes by clear and convincing evidence:

- (1) That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare; and
- (2) That the special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood; and
- (3) That the establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district; and
- (4) That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities have been or will be provided; and
- (5) That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets; and
- (6) That the special use shall in all other respects conform to the applicable land use regulations of the district in which it is located and shall not be in violation of any other applicable law, ordinance or regulation; and
- (7) At least one (1) year has elapsed since any denial of any prior application for a special use permit that would have authorized substantially the same as all or part of the sites, unless conditions in the area have substantially changed.

Please describe how this request meets the criteria by responding to the following questions in your own words.

1. How will the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use affect the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare?

There are no negative effects anticipated by the special use. The property is located behind big box retail users and has been vacant since the OTB ceased operations. The site will be enclosed by fence/buildings and only accessible to tenants.

2. How will the special use impact properties in the immediate area? No negative impacts anticipated. The self storage use does not generate heavy traffic and the site plan has been designed with screening to account for neighboring uses.

3. Will the use impede the normal/orderly development/improvement of surrounding property?

No, the use will not impede surrounding properties.

4. Are adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities provided?

Yes, the site was previously developed and this is merely a change in use of the existing facility.

5. Have adequate measures been taken to provide ingress/egress design to minimize traffic congestion in public streets?

Yes, the property does not take direct access from public streets. Access easements are already in place for the private roadways.

6. Does the use conform to the applicable land use regulations of the district in which it is located and does it violate any other applicable law, ordinance or regulation?

There are no known violations of any laws, ordinances, or regulations.

7. Has at least one (1) year elapsed since any denial of any prior application for a special use permit that would have authorized substantially the same as all or part of the sites (unless conditions in the area have changed substantially)?

Yes.

REQUIRED SUPPORTING ATTACHMENTS

- Site plan / concept plan / floor plan / building elevation plan
- Joliet Ownership Disclosure form
- Business license application (if applicable)

NOTARIZATION OF PETITION

Wisconsin
 STATE OF ~~ILLINOIS~~ ss
 COUNTY OF ~~WILL~~
 Eau Claire

I, Josh Melder, Senior Corp Counsel, depose and say that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to be present in person or by representation when this petition is heard before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

[Redacted Signature]

 Petitioner's Signature
 Josh Melder, Senior Corporate Counsel for Meranda Inc.

 Owner's Signature
 (If other than petitioner)

Subscribed and sworn to before me
 this 11 day of February, 2026

[Redacted Notary Name]

My Commission is permanent.



PERMANENT INDEX NUMBER (TAX NO. OR P. I. N.): 05-06-13-204-045-0000 ;
_____ ; _____ ; _____

Property Index Number/P.I.N. can be found on tax bill or Will County Supervisor of Assessments website

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (an attached copy preferred):

LOT SIZE: WIDTH: _____ DEPTH: _____ AREA: 2.82

PRESENT USE(S) OF PROPERTY: Vacant (Former OTB)

PRESENT ZONING OF PROPERTY: I-1 Light Industrial

VARIATION/APPEAL REQUESTED: Variance from facade standards in Section 47-15H.4 to allow LP Smart Siding engineered wood texture siding.

RESPONSE TO VARIATION CRITERIA

The Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to grant or recommend relief only when it has received adequate evidence to establish a practical difficulty or hardship. The evidence must support each of the following three conditions:

- (a) The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return by use permitted and subject to the conditions allowed by the regulations in the particular district or zone.
- (b) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances.
- (c) The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Please describe how this request meets the criteria by responding to the following questions in your own words.

1. How do the applicable zoning regulations prevent the property in question from yielding a reasonable return?
See attached narrative.

2. What unique circumstances exist which mandate a variance?

See attached narrative.

3. What impact would the granting of this variance have upon the essential character of the general area? Please include both positive and negative impacts.

See attached narrative

REQUIRED SUPPORTING ATTACHMENTS

- Site plan / concept plan / floor plan / building elevation plan
- Joliet Ownership Disclosure form
- Business license application (if applicable)

NOTARIZATION OF PETITION

Wisconsin
STATE OF ~~ILLINOIS~~ ss
COUNTY OF ~~WILL~~
Eau Claire

I, Josh Melder, Senior Corp Counsel for Menard, Inc., depose and say that the above statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to be present in person or by representation when this petition is heard before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

[Redacted Signature]

Petitioner's Signature *Senior Corp Counsel, Menard, Inc.*

Owner's Signature
(If other than petitioner)

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 6th day of March, 2026

[Redacted Notary Signature]

My Commission is permanent.



JOLIET VARIANCE NARRATIVE

Menard, Inc. is requesting a variance to the façade standards found in Section 47-15H.4 for a Menards Self Storage facility on property owned by Menards at 2450 W Jefferson St. Menards currently has over 25 operating facilities in the Midwest and has plans to continue to expand its footprint in the coming years. All facilities are located next to or close to Menards retail stores, as the self-storage business is an extension of the store operations. Store management and employees are in charge of ground operations, which gives the self-storage facility a local presence. Further assistance is provided by Menards general office self-storage team in Eau Claire, WI.

The proposed project will consist of approximately 174 non-climate controlled units in varying size and climate controlled units in the former OTB building. The OTB building is currently unoccupied. The site plan and façade materials have been specifically chosen to allow for redevelopment of the site.

The storage buildings and connected fencing will be constructed of high quality, premium grey LP SmartSiding, which is a newer siding material with wood texture. The LP SmartSiding is an upgraded siding material that is meant to provide more durability and a cleaner, more aesthetically pleasing look than traditional siding. The LP SmartSiding will meet the intention of the zoning code to have upgraded architectural materials used in the shopping center while also providing some contrast between the buildings to help enhance the architecture in the area.

Approving the variance would not have a negative impact on the adjoining properties. The self storage facility is located behind two big box retailers and is not adjacent to public roadways. The existing privacy fence and tree coverage will act as a buffer area along the residential properties to the south. The property to the west is utilized as a retention pond. The property to the north is occupied by the Menards home improvement store and the Walmart. The property to the east is the DMV facility. The façade has been designed to provide minimal impact to the neighboring properties.

CITY OF JOLIET OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE FORM

The City of Joliet requires that applicants for zoning relief, subdivision approval, building permits and business licenses disclose the identity of all persons having an ownership interest in the business and the real property associated with the application. A copy of this form must be completed and submitted with other application materials. Failure to properly complete and submit this form may result in the denial of the application.

I. INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICATION

This form is submitted as part of an application for the following (check all that apply):

- Rezoning, Special Use Permit, Variation, or Other Zoning Relief (Complete Sections II and III)
- Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, or Record Plat of Subdivision (Complete Sections II and III)
- Building Permit (Complete Sections II and III)
- Business License (Complete All Sections)

II. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPERTY

The address and PIN(s) of the real property associated with this application are:

2450 W Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60435

PIN(s): 05-06-13-204-045-0000

III. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

Select the type of owner of the real property associated with this application and fill in the appropriate contact information below:

- Individual:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the individual owner(s)
- Corporation:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons holding 3% or more of the stock of the corporation and the percentage of shares held by such stockholders
- Limited Liability Company:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all members of the company along with the percentage of ownership held by each member
- Land Trust:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the trustee(s) and all beneficiaries
- Partnership:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all partners
- Other type of organization:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons having a legal or equitable ownership interest in the organization or the right to direct the affairs of the organization

John R Menard Jr., 5101 Menard Drive, Eau Claire, WI 54703, [REDACTED]

E-MAIL: [REDACTED] FAX: _____

IV. BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

If the owner of the business is different than the owner of the real property associated with the application, then the following information must be provided:

Select the type of business owner associated with this application and fill in the contact information below:


- Individual:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of the individual owner(s)
- Corporation:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons holding 3% or more of the stock of the corporation and the percentage of shares held by such stockholders
- Limited Liability Company:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all members of the company along with the percentage of ownership held by each member
- Partnership:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all partners
- Other type of organization:** State the names, addresses, and phone #'s of all persons having a legal or equitable ownership interest in the organization

E-MAIL: _____ FAX: _____

NOTE:
 If a stockholder, member, beneficiary or partner disclosed in Section III or Section IV is not an individual, then the individuals holding the legal or equitable title to the real property or business associated with the application must also be disclosed. For example, if the real property associated with an application is owned by a land trust, and the beneficiary of the land trust is a limited liability company, then the members of the limited liability company must be disclosed. If one of the members of the limited liability company is a partnership, then the identity of the partners must be disclosed. If one of the partners is a corporation, then all persons owning 3% or more of the issued stock must be disclosed.

SIGNED: 
 / Josh Melder, Senior Corp Counsel for Menard, Inc.

DATE: 2/11/26

Name, Title, and Telephone Numbers of Person Completing and Submitting This Form:
Josh Melder, Senior Corporate Counsel - Menard, Inc. Properties Division, 

PRINT

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
CRITERIA FOR SPECIAL USES

Section 47-5.2 (C) of the Zoning Ordinance states:

A special use permit shall not be granted unless the applicant establishes by clear and convincing evidence:

	Does the evidence presented sustain this criteria?	Comments
(1) That the establishment, maintenance or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare; and		
(2) That the special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood; and		
(3) That the establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district; and		
(4) That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities have been or will be provided; and		
(5) That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets; and		
(6) That the special use shall in all other respects conform to the applicable land use regulations of the district in which it is located and shall not be in violation of any other applicable law, ordinance or regulation; and		
(7) At least one (1) year has elapsed since any denial of any prior application for a special use permit that would have authorized substantially the same as all or part of the sites, unless conditions in the area have substantially changed.		

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
CRITERIA FOR VARIATIONS

Section 47-19.8 of the Zoning Ordinance states:

A variation shall not be granted in any case unless the Board shall find and clearly state in its record of the case that:

	Does the evidence presented sustain this criteria?	Comments
(1) Reasons sustaining the contention that strict enforcement of the Ordinance would involve practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardship were found as follows: (a) _____ (b) _____ (c) _____ (list of reasons)		
(2) Adequate evidence was submitted to establish practical difficulties or particular hardship so that, in the judgment of the Board, a variation is permitted because the evidence sustained the existence of each of the three following conditions: (a) The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in the particular district or zone. (b) The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances. (c) The variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.		
(3) A public hearing was held on such variation of which at least 15 days and not more than 30 days notice was published in the _____ (name of newspaper) on _____ (date).		