

# Borough President Recommendation

**City Planning Commission**  
120 Broadway, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10271  
Fax # (212) 720-3488

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Return this completed form with any attachments to the Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E at the above address.
2. Send one copy with any attachments to the applicant's representative as indicated on the Notice of Certification.

Applications: C 180439 ZSM - 51 White Street

### Docket Description:

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the 51 White Street LLC, Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution ("ZR") and Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, to modify height and setback requirements of Section 23-662 and Section 23-692. The special permit would also modify inner court requirements of Section 23-85 and minimum distance between legally required windows to lot lines of Section 23-86 of the Zoning Resolution. This special permit would allow for vertical enlargement of an existing building by two stories.

COMMUNITY BOARD NO:

1

BOROUGH: Manhattan

## RECOMMENDATION

- APPROVE
- APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS (List below)
- DISAPPROVE
- DISAPPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS/CONDITONS (Listed below)

EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION – MODIFICATION/CONDITIONS (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

See Attached.

  
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

31 Oct 2018  
DATE



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1 Centre Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10007  
(212) 669-8300 p (212) 669-4306 f  
431 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027  
(212) 531-1609 p (212) 531-4615 f  
[www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov](http://www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov)

**Gale A. Brewer, Borough President**

October 31, 2018

**Recommendation on  
ULURP Application No. C 180439 ZSM 51 White Street By 51 White Street LLC**

**PROPOSED ACTIONS**

51 White Street LLC (“the applicant”) seeks a special permit pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution (“ZR”) to modify height and setback requirements of Section 23-662 and Section 23-692. The special permit would also modify inner court requirements of Section 23-85 and minimum distance between legally required windows to lot lines of Section 23-86 of the Zoning Resolution. This special permit would allow for vertical enlargement of an existing building by two stories.

Pursuant to ZR § 74-711, applicants may request a special permit to modify the use regulations of zoning lots that contain landmarks or are within Historic Districts as designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (“LPC”). In order for the City Planning Commission (“CPC”) to grant use modifications, the applicant must first meet the following conditions:

- 1) LPC has issued a report stating that the applicant will establish a continuing maintenance program for the preservation of the building and that such modification or restorative work will contribute to a preservation purpose;<sup>1</sup>
- 2) The application shall include a Certificate of Appropriateness, other permit, or report from LPC stating that such bulk modifications relate harmoniously to the subject landmark building in the Historic District;<sup>2</sup>

Further, in order to grant a special permit, the CPC must find that:

- 1) The modifications shall have minimal adverse effects on the structures or open space in the vicinity in terms of scale, location and access to light and air;
- 2) Such modifications shall have minimal adverse effects on the conforming uses within the building and in the surrounding area.

---

<sup>1</sup> The LPC issued a report, MOU (#19-11468) dated December 22, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> The LPC issued the Certificate of Appropriateness (#19-11467) on December 29, 2017.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The development site consists of a single site located 51 White Street (Block:175 Lot:24). It is bounded by Franklin Street to the South, Franklin Place to the East, and Church Street to the West. The property has 39 feet of frontage along the south side of White Street and a depth of 100 feet, for a total lot area of 3,900 square feet. The site is an interior lot, approximately 59'-7" from the intersection of White Street and Franklin Place. The site is mapped within a C62-A (R8A equivalent) zoning district and the site is also located within the Tribeca East Historic District. The site has a 5-story building that is currently vacant. According to the applicant, the sub-cellar, cellar, and first floor of the building were previously occupied by Use Group 6 commercial office space. The development site's second through fifth floors consisted of residential apartments, which were converted as-of-right in 1984. However, according to the applicant, no Certificate of Occupancy was issued for residential use in conjunction with the conversion.

## **Background and Area Context**

In 1992, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the Tribeca East Historic District, encompassing approximately twelve blocks. In addition to the district, there are several individual landmarks nearby the development site, such as the Condict Store immediately to the east of the development site at 55 White Street. The development site's westerly neighbor, The Civic Centre Synagogue, is a non-contributing building in the historic district. Most of the buildings immediately surrounding the development site range in height from five to seven stories and are residential, mixed use, and commercial buildings. According to the applicant, the area within 600 feet of the development site does contain some taller buildings, ranging in height from eight to 25 stories. The land within 600 feet of the development site is predominantly zoned C6-2A (R8A-equivalent) and C6-4A (R10A-equivalent). White Street, where the development site is located, is a narrow westbound one-way street with a width of 50 feet.

## **Proposed Development**

The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story vertical enlargement to the existing development site, and add a mezzanine floor between the first and second floors. The construction would result in a seven-story mixed use building (not including cellar and sub-cellar), with residential uses on the mezzanine through seventh floors and commercial office use on the first floor, cellar, and sub-cellar.

In order for the applicant to realize this enlargement as planned, they require waivers of the requirements of several sections of the Zoning Resolution.

1. ZR § 23-662, which requires a 15 foot setback at 85 feet.  
A small portion of the vertical enlargement penetrates the sky exposure plane as a result of the setback.

2. ZR § 23-692, which limits the height of the building to 67 feet, as it is limited to the lesser of the two abutting buildings. The neighboring building at 53 White Street (Civic Centre Synagogue) is 67 feet in height.  
The existing development site is currently 76 feet in height, which already exceeds what is allowed, as the building was constructed prior to the 1961 Zoning Resolution. The vertical enlargements would increase the height to approximately 100'3" (including the bulkhead) and would still be contextual with other building heights in the vicinity.
3. ZR § 23-851, requiring a minimum inner courtyard area of 1,200 square feet  
The existing development site does not conform to this requirement. The addition of the mezzanine floor will result in an inner courtyard area equal the current courtyard area of approximately 214 square feet. The vertical enlargements on the sixth and seventh floor will create a courtyard area of approximately 780 square feet.
4. ZR § 23-861, requiring a minimum distance of 30' to the lot line for legal windows  
The existing development site does not conform to this requirement. The addition of the mezzanine floor will result in a window to lot line distance of 5'6", as it exists currently in the building. The vertical enlargements on the sixth and seventh floor will result in a window to lot line distance of 20' on these floors.

### **COMMUNITY BOARD RECOMMENDATION**

51 White Street LLC presented their formal ULURP presentation of the proposed project at the Manhattan Community Board 1 Landmarks Committee Meeting held on October 20, 2016 and Community Board 1 Land Use, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee meeting held on September 13, 2018. The committee raised concern about the outreach to the surrounding community and suggested that a petition be circulated in order to raise awareness of the project prior to the Borough President recommendation.

At the full board meeting on September 25, 2018, 43 members of the board present voted to approve the application (with one abstention) on the condition that the Borough President is satisfied that sufficient notice was given to the community.

### **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

New York City's landmarks and historic districts are important in maintaining our unique identity and culture. The creation of the East Tribeca Historic District has resulted in the historic preservation of approximately 197 buildings in lower Manhattan. However, preservation while managing growth and demand is a major issue this city must deal with as we develop. It must be done carefully and thoughtfully within the context of the surrounding areas.

The proposed development at 51 White Street appears to be within context for the area. There have been similar enlargements within the district. According to the applicant, the building is also undergoing a major façade restoration, which would result in the removal of cement block that currently covers the original cast iron columns of the building. Other elements of the façade, including the marble, will be cleaned and restored and all of the windows will be replaced with

windows that match the original window profile. The original fire shutters on the building will also be restored. The applicant, and all subsequent owners, will be required to maintain these improvements in perpetuity, as part of a restrictive declaration to be filed on the property. This will ensure that the building's architectural history will be preserved for future generations.

**BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

Therefore, the Manhattan Borough President recommends approval of ULURP Application Nos. C 180439 ZSM as long the following condition is met:

The Applicant should conduct outreach to the community to make them aware of the pending City Planning Commission hearing on this application. They have provided notification to their neighbors on the street and will be reaching out to local preservation groups. They should also put signage up at the site, as well as the surrounding blocks, in order to inform the community of the upcoming public hearing. They should submit evidence of this outreach to the City Planning Commission as part of their review.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale A. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gale A. Brewer  
Manhattan Borough President