



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**

**March 28, 2017**

**Recommendation on ULURP Application C 180170 ZMM – 180 Avenue of the Americas  
By QT Soho Realty LLC**

QT Soho LLC (“the applicant”) seeks a zoning map amendment pursuant to Sections 197-c and 201 of the New York City Charter to rezone 180-188 Avenue of the Americas, 203-207 Spring Street and 100-112 Sullivan Street (Block 504, Lots 7501, 43, 39, p/o 36, p/o 34, p/o 31, and p/o 11) from an R7-2/C1-5 zoning district to an R7-2/C2-5 zoning district to permit a Use Group 9 dance studio and to legalize a Physical Culture Establishment (“PCE”) within an existing mixed-use commercial and residential building located at 180 Avenue of the Americas (“Project Site”), within the South Village neighborhood in Community Board 2, Manhattan.

In evaluating this land use action, the office of the Manhattan Borough President must evaluate the proposed zoning map changes for consistency and accuracy, and given the land use implications, the appropriateness for the growth, improvement and development of the neighborhood and borough.

**BACKGROUND**

**Area Context**

The Project Site is bounded by Avenue of the Americas to the west and Spring Street to the south. The block consists primarily of three- to six-story buildings, with the Project Site the tallest on the block, and is comprised of multi-family, mixed-residential and commercial buildings. West of the site is the Special Hudson Square District, which was designated in 2013 in an effort to preserve the area’s commercial base and the built character, and to encourage mixed-use development. South of the site, about midblock between Spring Street and Broome Street, is an M1-5B district, and further east is an M1-5B zoning district.

The Project Site is served by the A/C/E subway line located at Spring Street and Avenue of the Americas, and just two blocks northeast of the site is the B/D/F/M subway line on West Broadway and West Houston Street. Citibike bicycle stations are located just south of Spring Street and another is located north of West Houston Street.

**Project Area**

The proposed Project Area encompasses seven existing sites: 180 Avenue of the Americas, 203 Spring Street, 207 Spring Street, 100 Sullivan Street, 104 Sullivan Street, 112 Sullivan Street, and 188 Avenue of the Americas.

180 Avenue of the Americas is the Project Site. 207 Spring Street is a 6-story community facility building totaling 39,658 square feet immediately south of the Project Site and is owned by God's Love We Deliver, a non-profit organization. To the west is 203 Spring Street, a 6-story 12,662 square foot mixed-use building. To the rear of the Project Site are three multi-family residential buildings: 100 Sullivan Street which is 33,750 square feet; 104 Sullivan Street which is approximately 18,740 square feet; and, 112 Sullivan Street which is approximately 38,880 square feet. 188 Avenue of the Americas is also a 6-story building with 33,930 square feet.

### **Site Description**

The site owned by the applicant, 180 Avenue of the Americas, consists of a 14-story, mixed-use building with approximately 60,514 square feet of residential floor area, 8,642 gross square feet of commercial floor area on the ground floor, and 6,411 gross square feet of commercial floor area in the cellar.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant proposes a rezoning to allow for a Use Group 9 dance studio (Physique 57, which is currently located across the street from the Project Site) and the legalization of a PCE (Switch, which is currently on-site and which would be subject to a Board of Standards and Appeals special permit) within the mixed-use development at 180 Avenue of the Americas. The Use Group 9 dance studio will occupy 4,273 square feet of floor area on the ground floor and will be accessed by an entrance at Avenue of the Americas. The PCE would also be accessed by an entrance at Avenue of the Americas, and as proposed, would occupy 835 square feet on the ground floor and an additional 5,851 square feet in the cellar.

According to the applicant, Switch Playground is currently located in the Project Site. They have stated to our office that it initially functioned as accessory to the residential use, predominantly serving the building's residents. However, this gym has another branch in the West Village. This fact, together with marketing materials and programmatic offerings at the gym, do not conform to our common conception of an accessory gym for a residential building.

To facilitate the proposed development at the Project Site, the applicant proposes a zoning map amendment to eliminate the existing C1-5 commercial overlay over the Project Area and establish a C2-5 commercial overlay over 180 Avenue of the Americas, 207 Spring Street, 203 Spring Street, part of 100 Sullivan Street, and part of 188 Avenue of the Americas.

### **COMMUNITY BOARD RECOMMENDATION**

At its Full Board meeting on February 22, 2018, Manhattan Community Board 2 ("CB2") voted unanimously to approve the application with modifications. CB2 approved the rezoning of the Project Site, 180-188 Avenue of the Americas, and the elimination of the existing commercial overlay on Sullivan Street, but denied the action to extend the new commercial overlay to the primarily residential buildings on Spring Street.

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

Our office has raised substantive concerns with application proposals to change the permitted use, particularly in favor of luxury residential and retail uses. For this particular application, we believe the proposed zoning map amendment to rezone the project area's existing commercial overlay to accommodate uses that are similar to what is existing directly across the street is appropriate. The rezoning will bring existing local clientele into a newly constructed commercial space at the proposed development site, which has remained vacant and contributed much to the commercial blight we have come to experience throughout the city. We hope the applicant will ensure the proposed gyms provide some transparency at the street level to activate this quieter stretch of the Avenue of the Americas.

The existence of the gym, Switch Playground, at the Project Site raises some concerns about how an accessory gym is defined and interpreted especially in a neighborhood where some have sought to use creative descriptions of retail uses to argue for more favorable treatment under the Zoning Resolution. In any event, because we find the proposed rezoning appropriate and because we understand that Switch Playground will seek a permit from the BSA as a PCE, we believe approval of the application is appropriate.

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

**Therefore, the Manhattan Borough President recommends approval of ULURP Application NO. C 180170 ZMM.**

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