



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

March 7, 2014

Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
Board of Standards and Appeals
40 Rector Street New York, NY 10006

Re: BSA No. 2-14 BZ
Special Permit at 555 Sixth Avenue

Dear Ms. Srinivasan:

On the recommendation of its Chelsea Land Use Committee and after a duly noticed public hearing at the regular Board meeting on March 5, 2014, Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4), voted to recommend, with the conditions set out below, approval of an application to the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) for a physical culture establishment (PCE) at 555 Sixth Avenue. The application seeks a special permit to allow the operation of a Physical Culture Establishment (PCE).

The facility will be known as BFX (Boutique Fitness Experience), a company that is a division of the New York Sports Club. The site is located in three zoning districts: C6-2A, R8A and R8B. The PCE would be limited to the 100 foot depth of the C6-A zoning district in which it is a permitted use. The facility would occupy 9,492 square feet, and would be located in portions of the first floor and the cellar with an entrance on the first floor. These parts of the building are currently vacant. Other ground floor spaces have been renovated for new commercial uses. The rest of the building is occupied with residential units.

The BFX facility will offer individual fitness training, classes and machines for physical exercise. Classes would be in the front area. No Olympic style weight lifting (where weights are permitted to fall from overhead) is planned. The applicant has stated that the New York Sports Club has a long history of many well-run facilities, and that every residential apartment will be notified about the BSA application for this BFX facility.

The siting of a PCE in a residential building may result in noise and vibrations which can disturb residents. The applicant has endeavored to avoid such disturbances from this facility by:

- Retaining the services of an acoustical consulting and engineering firm;
- Conducting tests in residential apartments for sound and vibrations from typical equipment in the gym space;

- Based on testing, selecting sound and insulation measures (such as “box in box” design) to insulate residential and commercial uses in the building from disturbances; and
- Specifying these measures in a plan which is part of the BSA application.

We therefore recommend approval of the application with the following conditions:

- Programming will either not include potentially disruptive activities or will demonstrate conclusively with an acoustical engineering report that equipment use, classes and other activities classes will not disturb building residents; and
- If operation of the facility leads to complaints from residents or from the community, the operators of BFX will attend meetings set up by the Board and quickly take any steps necessary to correct the problems leading to the complaints.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



J. Lee Compton
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee