



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

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Honorable Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx Borough President

MS. EVONNE CAPERS
Board Chairperson

MR. JOHN SANCHEZ
District Manager

Health and Human Services Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 20, 2021

The Health and Human Services Committee Meeting met on Thursday, May 20, 2021 via Zoom Audio and Video Conferencing. The following members were present: Clarita Bailon, Sadija Cekovic, Frank Franz, Maria Latimer, Matthew Martinez, Rosa Peraza, Reggie Powell, and Lisa Sanchez.

The following item was discussed:

- FRESH Update Text Amendment

The Department of City Planning is proposing a zoning text amendment, FRESH II, to update the existing Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH) program under the NYC ZR 63-00 that provides greater incentives for neighborhood grocery stores to locate in underserved neighborhoods in the City. The FRESH program incentivizes the construction of supermarkets in underserved areas of the city, increases accessibility to fresh foods and encourages better access to foods, thus, healthier neighborhoods. The Department of City Planning informed reported that updated analysis of the supermarket landscape across New York City in 2018 showed that many neighborhoods remain underserved by fresh food stores. The proposed zoning text amendment, FRESH II, will update the existing program that provides greater incentives for neighborhood grocery stores to locate in underserved neighborhoods in the City. FRESH II update includes the expansion of the FRESH boundary to additional neighborhoods of the City that illustrate a high Supermarket Needs Index [SNI], the prevention of saturation of supermarkets within FRESH boundary, the modification of glazing requirements for conversions and parking requirements and minor zoning text clean ups. The Health and Human Services Committee recommended that a favorable recommendation be given to the New York City Department of City Planning on the Health and Fitness Citywide Text Amendment.

- Health and Fitness Text Amendment

The Department of City Planning is proposing a Health and Fitness Text Amendment to reduce barriers for gyms, spas, and licensed massage. Gyms, spas, and massage therapy are desirable community amenities and they are facing a high regulatory burden where a BSA Special Permit is required. Since then, these community amenities have changed significantly. Despite being

recognized and valued neighborhood services, our zoning creates a major regulatory barrier for these small businesses. The permit often takes more than 6 months to be granted, limiting opportunities for entrepreneurship and access to services that promote health. These uses are not allowed along many local retail streets that permit other service and retail businesses like restaurants, salons, and drug stores. The permit also prevents desired business from moving into local retail streets at a time when vacancy rates are high and expected to rise. The Department of City Planning is proposing that the Remove BSA Special Permit for Physical Culture or Health Establishments (73-36). Small gyms and spas will be treated similarly to a range of local amenities, such as drug stores, restaurants, or salons. They will be classified in the Zoning Resolution as Use Group 6, limited to 10,000 square feet in Floor Area per establishment and as-of-right in all commercial and manufacturing districts. The large gyms and spas will be treated similarly to banquet halls, music studios, and car showrooms. They will be classified in the Zoning Resolution as Use Group 9, and as-of-right in C2, C4, C5, C6, C8 and M districts, as well as C1-8, C1-9, and C1 overlays mapped with R9/R10. They are also proposing to remove BSA Special Permit for Physical Culture or Health Establishments (73-36). Licensed massage therapy will be classified with other ambulatory health care uses as Use Group 4A or Use Group 6B (health care office), permissible in most residential districts and all commercial and manufacturing districts. The Health and Human Services Committee recommended that a favorable recommendation be given to the New York City Department of City Planning on the FRESH Update Text Amendment.