



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ONE ROOSEVELT SQUARE
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JAMES RAUSSE, FAICP, WEDG
COMMISSIONER

August 6, 2025

VIA EMAIL:

Honorable City Council Members
City of Mount Vernon
1 Roosevelt Square
Mount Vernon, New York 10550

RE: Request for the City Council to enact legislation to update the City Municipal Code to permit and regulate gyms and health clubs. For consideration on the agenda at the August 13, 2025 City Council meeting.

Honorable City Council Members:

I am writing to respectfully request for the City Council to enact legislation to update the City Municipal Code to permit and regulate gyms and health clubs. This would require an amendment to *Chapter 267 – Zoning*.

Although Mount Vernon has several existing and well-known gyms/health clubs that have operated in the city for many years, Chapter 267 – Zoning does not list gyms or health clubs as permitted uses anywhere in the city. This has meant that these businesses, although currently operating, cannot receive Certificates of Tenancy or Certificates of Occupancy from the Building Department. This has also meant that new businesses of this type cannot receive approvals from any of the city's land use boards.

Although not listed as a permitted use in *Chapter 267 – Zoning*, this chapter does, however, contain a definition for health clubs as follows:

HEALTH CLUB - Membership facilities designed and used for body conditioning and rehabilitation, including activities such as aerobic and related class exercises. Health clubs may contain equipment such as whirlpools, saunas, steam rooms, showers, locker facilities and, as an accessory use, a health food bar.

Health clubs are also listed in the schedule of off-street parking and loading requirements with a parking requirement of 5 spaces per 1,000 sf of gross floor area.

Given that *Chapter 267 – Zoning* already provides the above definition and parking requirements for Health Clubs, it suggests that the absence of health clubs being listed as a permitted use in the ordinance is perhaps an oversight or error in the existing code. We believe that the best course of action would be for the City Council to consider making an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to add health clubs as principal permitted uses in the following zoning districts: CB, NB, DB, OB, LI-7.5, I, MVW-H, MVW-C, DTOAD, MX-1, TOD-1. We also recommend that the definition of Health Club be amended to include mention of amenities such as free weights, cardio equipment and boxing equipment, since these amenities are now commonly found in health club facilities.

We thank the City Council for your support in addressing the needs in the city. I am available to address any questions or concerns you may have regarding this request.





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Sincerely,

JAMES RAUSSE, FAICP, WEDG

cc: Mayor Shawyn Patterson-Howard
Comptroller Darren M. Morton
Malcolm Clark, Chief of Staff

