



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PLANNING



PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION REVIEW

DATE: January 27, 2010
TO: Public Space Committee
FROM: Joshua Ghaffari, Citywide Planner
SUBJECT: 450 5th Street, NW

APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant: Damon Ellis (Authorized Agent)
Location: This site is located on the west side of 5th Street NW, between D Street NW and E Street NW. The property is located in a SP-2 zoning district. The site is located in the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site.
Proposal: The applicant is requesting permission to install a new guard booth, new planters, new bike racks and new bollards in public space around the perimeter of an existing office building at 450 5th Street, NW.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Planning received the public space application for review on November 20, 2009. The application was approved by the DC State Historic Preservation Office on August 12, 2009.

BASIS OF REPORT

OP has reviewed the application, considered existing site conditions, and completed research on the site to prepare this report. OP also referred to several policies in the Comprehensive Plan as part of completing this report:

Policy UD-3.1.7: Improving the Street Environment

Create attractive and interesting commercial streetscapes by promoting ground level retail and desirable street activities, making walking more comfortable and convenient, ensuring that sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic, minimizing curb cuts and driveways, and avoiding windowless facades and gaps in the street wall.

Policy UD-3.1.8: Neighborhood Public Space

Provide urban squares, public plazas, and similar areas that stimulate vibrant pedestrian street life and provide a focus for community activities. Encourage the “activation” of such spaces through the design of adjacent structures; for example, through the location of shop entrances, window displays, awnings, and outdoor dining areas.

Policy E-1.1.3: Landscaping

Encourage the use of landscaping to beautify the city, enhance streets and public spaces, reduce storm water runoff, and create a stronger sense of character and identity. 603.7

DCMR Title 12: Chapter 11 - Downtown Streetscape Regulations

1105.9 Variations in the predominant paving material may be made at building entrances and along the building line. These variations are subject to (Streetscape) Committee approval with the following provisions:

(b) At the entry to buildings, paving may be varied for up to one-third (1/3) of the distance from the property line to the face of the curb and for a width not to exceed twice the doorway size;

KEY ISSUES

The proposal includes a variety of new fixtures as well as updated paving of curbs and gutters in public space on the perimeter of the existing office building. On the 5th Street NW side installing 2 new bike racks and 8 new planters. On the 6th Street NW side installing 1 new guard booth, 1 new planter, 2 new bike racks, 2 new bollards and increasing the height of an existing planter on the corner of 6th Street NW and E Street NW. On the E Street NW side installing 2 new bollards.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed application is appropriate for the site and sets a good example of how to best integrate safety enhancements into public space.

The Office of Planning recommends that this application be approved.