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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
OFFICE OF PLANNING



**PUBLIC SPACE APPLICATION REVIEW**

**DATE:** January 6, 2009  
**TO:** Public Space Committee  
**FROM:** Joshua Ghaffari, Citywide Planner  
**SUBJECT:** 4533 Wisconsin Avenue, NW

**APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF**

**Applicant:** Kimberly Brown (Authorized Agent)  
**Location:** The site of the proposed unenclosed sidewalk café is on east side of Wisconsin Avenue, NW between Albemarle Street, NW and Brandywine Street, NW. It is located in a C-3-A zoning district. It is an active commercial area with moderate pedestrian and vehicular activity.  
**Proposal:** The applicant is requesting to install an unenclosed sidewalk café with 4 tables and 8 chairs.

**BACKGROUND**

The Office of Planning received the public space application for review on December 11, 2009.

**BASIS OF REPORT**

The Office of Planning (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 UD-3.10: Sidewalk Cafes**

Discourage the enclosure of sidewalk cafes in manner that effectively transforms them into indoor floor space. The design of sidewalk cafes should be compatible with the architectural qualities of the adjoining buildings, should compliment the street environment, and should not impede pedestrian movement.

**KEY ISSUES**

The proposed unenclosed sidewalk café consists of 4 tables and 8 chairs. The sidewalk café area is 120 square feet, which allows for a maximum of 8 chairs. The total sidewalk width from the property line to the curb is approximately 30'. There is a 7' furniture zone, which leaves approximately 10' of clear pedestrian walkway. In addition to the tables and chairs the proposed application also includes a 3' high rope and poles around the perimeter of the sidewalk café. The rope and poles need to be removable in order to provide additional space for pedestrians when the café is closed.

**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION**

The sidewalk café adheres to public space regulations and is a welcome addition to the neighborhood. The applicant needs to ensure that the rope and poles will be removable.

**The Office of Planning recommends that this application be approved.**