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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: 601 13th Street, NW

APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant: Shannon Creighton (Authorized Agent)
Location: The site of the proposed unenclosed sidewalk café is on south side of G Street, NW at the east corner of 13th Street, NW. It is located in a DD/C-4 zoning district. It is an active commercial area with moderate pedestrian and vehicular activity.
Proposal: The applicant is requesting an unenclosed sidewalk café with 5 tables and 10 chairs.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Planning received the public space application for review on November 5, 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 5 tables and 10 chairs. The sidewalk café area is approximately 80 square feet, which only allows for 5 chairs. The total sidewalk width from the property line to the curb is approximately 19'. There is a furniture zone of approximately 6', which leaves an 8' clear pedestrian walkway.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The sidewalk café needs to be reconfigured to accommodate the proposed amount of seating. The café area as proposed can only accommodate 5 chairs in accordance with public space regulations. The applicant could use additional square footage along the frontage of their business in order to accommodate additional chairs.

The Office of Planning recommends that this application be approved for a maximum of 5 chairs. If the applicant wishes to have additional seating they must submit new drawings to show the appropriate accommodation.