

Annapolis Historic Preservation Commission

Sidewalk Café Furniture Guidelines

Pursuant to Section 21.08.060 (E) (8) of the Sidewalk Café regulations adopted on November 13, 1995 (O-13-95), the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has adopted the following furniture guidelines.

These guidelines are based on the more specific criteria for preserving our historic streetscapes as outlined in the Annapolis Historic District Design Manual, *Building in the Fourth Century*, published in 2007.

A. FURNITURE

1. Lighting

The streets of the Historic District are well-lighted by reproductions of historically appropriate fixtures. Additional light is also provided through shop windows and illuminated signs.

The HPC requires the following:

- a. Any lighting shall be restricted to table tops, and shall be very low intensity

2. Planters

The HPC Design Manual provides types and materials (see HPC Guideline C.8 Landscape Planters, page 42). For sidewalk cafes, they shall be used for their historic purpose rather than as enclosures.

The HPC requires the following:

- a. Planters shall be in scale with the space of the adjacent sidewalk and the adjacent building. Materials shall be compatible with the adjacent building façade;
- b. Planters left on the sidewalk when the areas are not in use for dining shall be compatible with the architecture of the adjacent building;
- c. Plant materials shall be compatible in scale with the adjacent building;
- d. Hanging planters should be carefully placed so that they do not obscure historic building features or create a potential hazard for pedestrians, café customers and staff;
- e. Plant material must be well maintained.

3. Signs

Signs are regulated by Planning and Zoning and must be reviewed by HPC.

4. Furnishings

Furnishings are the most important element; therefore the HPC requires the following:

Research to assemble a list of specific furnishings that will be considered by the HPC and adopted as "pre-approved."

Suggested characteristics

- Light weight, portable
- In scale with the area in which they are placed
- Dark in color or finish as opposed to white or bright colors
- Natural materials, such as wood or metal, painted or varnished
- Synthetic materials are strongly discouraged, consistent with the HPC Design Manual

5. Miscellaneous Provisions

The HPC will not approve the use of any "floor covering" on a public sidewalk.

B. STRUCTURAL ENCLOSURES

While O-13-95 addresses “furniture guidelines”, Title 21 of the City Code requires a Certificate of Approval by the HPC before a person may alter a structure in the historic district in a manner which affects the exterior appearance of the structure.

Enclosure of parts of our narrow sidewalks with portable devices changes the historic character of the street and may alter traditional circulation patterns. Enclosures could also be misunderstood as extensions of historic buildings and could obscure historic buildings.

For these reasons, the HPC requires the following:

1. Sidewalk cafes shall be open to adjacent walks and should not be enclosed or partially enclosed, by fences, planters, barriers, lattice, railings or ropes of any type;
2. There shall be no overhead structural enclosure, shading devices such as awnings or umbrellas;
3. Nothing shall be affixed to the building.

Revised and adopted at the Annapolis Historic Preservation Commission Hearing on March 26, 2009.