



**PRIVATELY OWNED
PUBLIC
SPACE**



Public Plaza 2009 Follow-up Text Amendment - **Approved!**

What is being proposed?

On February 17, 2009, the City Planning Commission referred for public review, an amendment to the Zoning Resolution proposed by the Department of City Planning that would make minor changes to the regulations for privately owned public plazas that were approved in October 2007. The goal of the proposed text is to enhance the 2007 text and enable the creation of high quality public plazas on privately owned sites that are inviting, open, accessible and visible.

The proposal is limited to design and operational standards and makes no changes that relate to bulk, permitted floor area, the amount of floor area generated through the provision of bonus plazas or to locations where the plaza bonus is available.

Why is this text amendment needed?

Since the adoption of the 2007 text amendment, recent applications for new public plazas or existing plazas with design changes have provided an opportunity to identify certain regulations that warrant improvement or clarification of the 2007 text. The purpose of the proposed text amendment is to enhance certain provisions of the 2007 text to enable greater pedestrian circulation, ensure visibility into and throughout plazas, and promote attractive and well-maintained public spaces. The amendment would revise the language of the text to clarify some standards, add new provisions to improve the quality and utility of public plazas and eliminate certain provisions that are outdated.

 [View the proposed Follow-Up Text Amendment.](#)

What do the changes entail?

The proposed amendment would make minor changes to the following provisions:

- Area dimensions
- Location restrictions
- Sidewalk frontages
- Seating
- Planting and trees
- Plaza signage
- Uses fronting on public plazas
- Compliance
- Design changes to existing plazas
- Approval processes for kiosks and open air cafes

Public Review

On February 17, 2009, the City Planning Commission referred the proposed text amendment (N 090317 ZRY) to affected Community Boards and Borough Presidents for review and comment. On April 22, 2009, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposal.

On May 6, 2009, the City Planning Commission approved the text amendment with modifications. Read the  [modified text amendment](#).

The Commission approved the zoning text amendment with the following modifications to clarify or correct language in the following sections of the proposed text:

1. Section 37-742 - to clarify that the maximum height of bounding walls of planters and planting beds may be 18 inches measured from the highest adjacent walking surface
2. Section 37-753(e) - to clarify the provisions regarding accessory signage within the public plaza so that no more than three accessory signs can be located within the public plaza, only one of which may be freestanding. The freestanding accessory sign may not be any greater than 24 inches in dimension when not facing a street.

3. Section 37-76 - to clarify that existing and new building walls may be used to determine the required retail frontage.
4. Section 37-78(a) - to correctly reference "public plaza" instead of "urban plaza".

On June 10, 2009, the City Council adopted the Public Plaza Follow-up Text Amendment. The text changes are now in effect.

For more information about the proposal, contact the Manhattan Office of the Department of City Planning at 212-720-3480.

Related Notes

-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).