


Special 125th Street District Sidewalk Cafes Text Amendment - **Approved!** **Update June 29, 2011:**

On June 29, 2011 the City Council adopted the Special 125th Street District Sidewalk Cafes Text Amendment.   
View the [adopted text amendment](#). The zoning text changes are now in effect.

**Introduction**

The New York City Department of City Planning is proposing a zoning text amendment to the Special 125th Street District that would affect the regulations governing the location of the different types of [sidewalk cafes](#) within the Special District.

The [Special 125th Street District rezoning](#) (N 080100(A) ZRM, C 080099(A) ZMM) was approved by the City Council on April 30, 2008 and subsequently amended on November 19, 2008 (N 090031 ZRM). The proposed text amendment is a follow-up corrective action that responds to concerns expressed throughout the 125th Street rezoning public review process by the public and elected officials regarding the potential impact of sidewalk cafes on portions of the Special District's sidewalks that accommodate high pedestrian traffic volumes.



125th Street

The proposed text amendment would only affect the sidewalk cafes regulations within the Special 125th Street District. The proposed text amendment would prohibit enclosed and unenclosed sidewalk cafes entirely throughout the Special District; would prohibit all sidewalk cafes within areas of the Special District with high pedestrian traffic and opposite predominately residential areas; and would allow small sidewalk cafes on a limited number of locations where they are appropriate, would not adversely affect pedestrian circulation, and should continue to be allowed.

**Neighborhood Context**

125th Street is the main commercial and transportation spine of upper Manhattan. The sidewalks along 125th Street are heavily used as they provide access and connections to varied forms of public transportation, a diverse range of retail and commercial establishments, office structures, apartment buildings and places of worship. The sidewalks along portions of the street are also heavily used by street vendors. This collection of destinations and activities provides most sidewalks along 125th Street with vast amounts of pedestrian traffic throughout the day and evening. The proposal would ensure that clear sidewalk space continues to be sufficiently available to accommodate pedestrian movement and that future sidewalk cafes do not adversely impact the sidewalk's ability to accommodate pedestrian traffic.

The character along 124th and 126th Streets varies from that of 125th Street and although it accommodates commercial uses, the predominant land use is residential. Significant portions of both streets contain uninterrupted rows of brownstones on the north and south sides of the streets. Similarly, the areas to the north and south, outside the Special 125th Street District, are predominantly residential in character with some ground floor commercial uses located along the north-south avenues. The proposed text amendment seeks to limit the location of future sidewalk cafes within these areas of the Special District in order to enhance its residential character.

**Existing Zoning Regulations Affecting Sidewalk Cafes within the Special 125th Street District**

The existing Special 125th Street District zoning regulations allow the three existing types of sidewalk cafes, as defined in the Zoning Resolution: enclosed, unenclosed and small sidewalk cafes to be located within the commercial zoning districts that comprise the majority of the Special District. In addition to 125th Street, the current regulations allow sidewalk cafes to be located within commercial districts currently mapped along the south side of 126th Street and along the north side of 124th Street, where the opposite sides of both streets, outside the Special District, are predominantly residential.

**Proposed Amendment**

The proposed text amendment would modify sections 14-43, 14-44, 97-03 and 97-13 of the Zoning Resolution that control the location of sidewalk cafes within the Special 125th Street District to:




and outreach to the local elected officials, the Commission modified the Department's original proposal to expand opportunities for the placement of future unenclosed small sidewalk cafes in the Special District and to allow unenclosed large sidewalk cafes along the east side of Malcolm X Boulevard between West 125th and West 126th streets. On June 29, 2011, the City Council adopted the zoning changes, and they now are in effect.

For more information about this proposal please contact the Manhattan Office of the Department of City Planning at (212) 720-3480.

## Related Notes

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-  Items accompanied by this symbol require the [free Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).
- Brief explanations of terms in *green italics* can be viewed by [visiting glossary page](#). Words and phrases followed by an asterisk (\*) are defined terms in the Zoning Resolution, primarily in Section 12-10. Consult the Zoning Resolution for the official and legally binding definitions of these words and phrases.