



STAFF REPORT

This document is the staff's comparison of the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts, the Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30, Revised Municipal Code) and other applicable adopted area guidelines as applied to the proposed application. It is intended to provide guidance during the commission's deliberation of the proposed application. Guidelines are available at www.denvergov.org/preservation

Project: #2024-COA-960
Address: 1550 Market Street
Located in Special District #2
Year structure built: 2013 (Period of Significance: 1860-1941)
Applicant: CDS Development Services, representing STK Steakhouse

LDDRC Meeting: December 5, 2024
Staff: Amy Amidon

Project Scope Under Review:

The applicant proposes a new outdoor dining area to serve a restaurant. The private dining area is to be surrounded by a metal and glass railing and sheltered by an overhead canopy with operable louvers. Decorative lighting and electric heaters are to hang from the canopy.

Footprint: Approximately 950 square feet (canopy is 95' long x 10' deep), approximately 577 square feet enclosed dining
Height: Approximately 14' to the top of the canopy

Materials:

Patio: Existing sidewalk surface	Railing: Dark Bronze Metal with frosted glazing panels
Canopy: Dark Bronze metal	Other: Infrared Electric Heaters, pendants and linear lighting

Staff summary:

The building at 1550 Market Street was built in 2013. It is a large structure, spanning almost the full length of the blockface between 16th and 15th Streets. The tallest part of the structure, towards 16th Street, is located in Special District 2 of Lower Downtown. This designation allows for the possible approval of extra height and density. The lower part of the structure is outside of Special District 2. Significant to this review, the Landmark Ordinance requires that six of the nine members of LDDRC must concur in order to approve a project in a Special District. The proposed outdoor dining improvements span across the Special District boundary, therefore the policy regarding six consenting votes applies.

STK restaurant would like to formalize their outdoor dining area, located on the public sidewalk adjacent to the business. Recently they have erected an unapproved temporary a structure for this purpose, which must be removed.

Outdoor dining enlivens downtown and is generally supported by the design guidelines. LDDRC reviews all permanently installed features, such as this railing and canopy, but does not review movable object such as dining furnishings and umbrellas. Regarding the application for STK, staff supports the proposed railing, but does not support the canopy as designed. The applicant was encouraged to restudy the canopy element so that it clearly relates to existing fenestration openings in the building, rather than extending across the façade without regard for columns, symmetry of the façade, etc. Staff does find that a canopy would be a positive addition to this building from the perspective of providing human scale, just not as designed. If a canopy is not approved, umbrellas can be placed in the dining area without further review.

Excerpted from Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Historic District (2002)

Standards & Guidelines	Meets Standards & Guidelines?	Comments
<p>Policy 5.3. Facade Compositions A building's scale, articulation and definition are critical factors in determining how well it fits its context.</p> <p>5.3.4 Scale</p> <p>Requirement: Building facades shall be designed with appropriate human scale and scaling elements.</p> <p>Preference: Scaling elements may include, but are not limited to, expressions of materials by means of texture, color, and size; articulation of floor lines and structural grids; attention to details, including articulation of doors, windows, and balconies; articulation of cornices and banding; use of color changes; and streetfront or storefront articulation, including the use of awnings, canopies, signs, transoms, and kick plates.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Although staff does not support the canopy as designed because it does not respond to existing architectural elements on the building, canopies or awnings at the storefront level would add visual interest and a pedestrian scale element to the building.</p>
<p>Policy 7.1. Awnings Awnings are like eyebrows over storefront windows: they help shade the merchandise from harsh sunlight and the observer from glare. Materials, configuration, dimensions, and location of awnings must be appropriate to the building. For requirements related to awning signage, refer to Appendix A: Signs.</p> <p>7.1.1 Design</p> <p>Requirement: Awnings shall be designed as integral elements of building façade.</p> <p>Preference: Awnings should be a minimum of three feet deep (front to back).</p> <p>Preference: Awnings should be functional, actually offering people and merchandise shelter from rain and sun.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>As designed, the canopy would not integrate with the existing façade. It is applied to the façade, running across columns, without relating to existing window and door openings. It goes beyond providing shade and protection from weather just over fenestration, as the guidelines describe. The guidelines specifically state that a continuous band of awning should not obscure architectural details.</p> <p>While it is understood that the applicant would like to shelter the dining patrons from weather, the proposed canopy is much larger than the seating area and unnecessarily extends its encroachment over the public sidewalk.</p> <p>Staff does not object to the proposed material or finish of the canopy, which is a bronze metal to match other materials on the façade.</p>

<p>7.1.2 Placement</p> <p>Preference: A continuous band of awning should not obscure architectural details.</p> <p>7.1.3 Materials</p> <p>Requirement: Awnings shall be constructed of traditional materials, such as fabric, metal and glass.</p> <p>Requirement: Plastic awnings shall not be permitted.</p>		
<p>Policy 7.2. Lighting All exterior lighting shall be of a relatively low level in keeping with the overall historic character of Lower Downtown.</p> <p>7.2.1 Floodlighting</p> <p>Requirement: General floodlighting of any exterior building surface is not permitted.</p> <p>7.2.2 Exterior Downlighting</p> <p>Preference: Lighting of sidewalk surfaces shall be generally discouraged except at defined dining areas. Within these areas, lighting shall be kept at the lowest possible level.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The application includes a specification for pendant lights which would effectively illuminate the dining tables. Renderings also indicate that linear lighting of some type would run along the perimeter, and maybe even on the face of the canopy. This aspect of the application needs clarification. Staff has concerns that the linear lighting would not be of “a relatively low level” as this guideline requires and that the canopy might have a marquee like character that might not be appropriate.</p>
<p>Policy 10.4 Sidewalk Merchant Zones The sidewalk is the realm of the pedestrian. But other uses can peacefully coexist, provided certain considerations are made and rules followed.</p> <p>10.4.1 Restaurants and dining</p> <p>Requirement: Railings shall enclose dining areas.</p> <p>Requirement: No features of a dining area shall overhang the boundary defined in its revocable permit.</p> <p>Requirement: Railing design shall be reviewed and approved by the LDD/DRB.</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>	<p>A railing will define the space, as called for by the guidelines.</p> <p>The louvered canopy above does extend beyond the seating area, which staff has identified as a concern in terms of guideline compliance.</p>

Excerpted from Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures & Districts (2022)

Standards & Guidelines	Meets Standards & Guidelines?	Comments
<p>4.30 When locating a plaza, courtyard, patio, dining area or deck with a new building, minimize visual and functional impacts on the streetscape.</p> <p>a. Locate a plaza or courtyard to be level with, and directly accessible from, the public sidewalk.</p> <p>b. Consider locating an at-grade dining area to the side or rear of a property.</p> <p>c. Place decks to the side or rear of a property (preferred).</p> <p>d. Maintain views of a historic building when locating a patio or dining area adjacent to the street and sidewalk.</p> <p>e. Use high quality materials for patio railings and furniture.</p> <p>f. Use simple, low, and open patio railings.</p> <p>g. Avoid highly decorative patio railings.</p> <p>h. Do not affix umbrella holders or planters to patio railings.</p> <p>i. Do not use projecting or cantilevered decks.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The outdoor dining area is placed on the existing sidewalk, against the building façade. The size of the dining area is reasonable and lives ample space for pedestrians passing by.</p> <p>Staff does not find that the proposal, including the canopy, would have a negative impact on the visibility any historic resource.</p>

Excerpted from Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Streetscape (1991)

Standards & Guidelines	Meets Standards & Guidelines?	Comments
<p>Sidewalk Cafes</p> <p>Sidewalk cafes are encouraged in Lower Downtown. They allow patrons to enjoy people-watching, the District's interesting buildings, and the Colorado sunshine. The seating area should be well defined and easy to maintain. Metal railings painted federal green should be used to distinguish the outdoor cafe from the pedestrian path. Seating areas for cafes should not block the free flow of pedestrians. Sidewalk cafes should be located back from intersections where pedestrians tend to queue up before crossing the street. The placement of</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Staff supports the proposal for an outdoor dining area at this location. It appears that this particular blockface would benefit from some animation of the streetscape.</p> <p>The proposed metal railing is a bronze finish, to match other elements of the façade. Staff supports this proposal as the property is an infill building and the bronze finish meets the intent of being a dark, neutral color.</p> <p>As stated above, the placement of the outdoor seating allows easy navigation around it for passersby and other building users.</p>

defined seating space should leave ample room for pedestrians to pass by.		
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Basis: The proposed outdoor dining area and the surrounding railing complies with each of the applicable design guideline documents and will enhance the public realm. The proposed canopy, however, does not meet the design guidelines.

Suggested Motion: I move to APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS application #2024-COA-960 such that the location of the outdoor dining area and the surrounding railing are approved, but the canopy, lighting and heaters are not approved for 1550 Market Street, as per design policy, standards, and guidelines **5.3, 7.1, 7.2** and **10.4** from the Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Historic District, **4.30** from the Denver Guidelines For Landmark Structures and Districts, and the section on **Sidewalk Café's** from the Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Streetscape, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.

END