

City backs down on office roof terrace crackdown

By Steve Cuozzo

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A blast of fresh air from City Hall blew away a kooky crackdown on office-building roof terraces.

The Department of Buildings has backed off a campaign to disallow outdoor terraces in commercial towers. The about-face followed a New York Post report on alarm among landlords and developers.

Department of City Planning officials — who feared that the policy threatened the commercial real estate market — met with the DOB to hash it out. The DCP advised its sister agency that the use of office building terraces “as open passive recreation space” is allowed.

The DOB on Friday sent landlords a draft memo which “clarified” that terraces are OK, subject to minor details.

Melissa Grace, a spokesperson for Mayor de Blasio, said, “We are glad to clear this up and make sure we have common-sense rules that reflect the real world of what tenants want and need.”

Alfresco spaces are one of the most popular office-tenant amenities.

But as The Post first revealed on July 5, the DOB was denying or interfering with terrace plans. Rejections were based on a 1961 zoning rule stating that, “all uses must be contained within enclosed buildings.”

The rule was meant mainly to curb outdoor flea markets. But the DOB’s new reading of it imperiled open-air decks planned at high-profile projects including 390 Madison Ave., 3 World Trade Center and 91 Ninth Ave.

One developer told The Post Friday night: “We are very happy to see DOB responding to the real estate community in a partnership-like way.”