

Variances from Chapter 297, Signs, of the Former City of Toronto Municipal Code - (Downtown, North Toronto)

(City Council on November 23, 24 and 25, 1999, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Toronto Community Council recommends the adoption of the following reports from the Acting Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services:

(October 8, 1999)

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations for an application for minor variances to permit the owner to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the north building elevation at 117 Peter Street.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) That City Council approve Application No. 999067 for minor variances from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit the owner to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the north building elevation of the building at 117 Peter Street.
- (2) That the applicant be advised, upon approval of Application No. 999067, of the requirement to obtain the necessary permits from the Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services.

Comments:

The property is located on the south-east corner of Richmond Street West and Peter Street, in the King-Spadina Reinvestment Area. The property accommodates a three-storey commercial building with a night club known as “Tonic” on the first floor level. The applicant is requesting permission to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the north building elevation. The sign is 3.66 metres long and 2.13 metres high, with an area of 7.80 m² (see Figure 1).

The sign does not comply with Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code in the following ways:

1. the sign will not be mounted wholly against the wall of the building; and
2. the sign will partially block a window of the building.

The first variance occurs because the sign is mounted against a steel frame, which is, in turn, mounted against the wall of the building. The sign closely resembles a fascia sign, except that it is not placed directly against the wall of the building. I consider this variance to be technical in nature and therefore acceptable.

Regarding the second variance, a site visit by staff has confirmed that the sign slightly extends over the window's frame only and it does not affect any light access nor views and is therefore acceptable.

I am recommending approval of this application, as I find the variances requested to be minor and within the general intent and purpose of the sign provisions of the Municipal Code.

Contact:

Norm Girdhar
Telephone: (416) 392-7209
Fax: (416) 392-0580
E-Mail: ngirdhar@city.toronto.on.ca

Insert Table/Map No. 1
117 Peter Street

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117 Peter Street

(October 18, 1999)

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations for an application for minor variances to permit the replacement of an existing non-conforming illuminated fascia sign, for third party advertising purposes, on the south elevation of a two-storey commercial building at 480 Yonge Street. The building is listed by Council under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no Financial Implications and Impact Statement resulting from the adoption of the report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council approve Application No. 999050 for minor variance from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit the replacement of an existing non-conforming illuminated fascia sign, for third party advertising purposes, on the south elevation of a two-storey commercial building at 480 Yonge Street, on the condition that an existing third party fascia sign on the north elevation of the building is removed prior to issuance of the necessary permits.
- (2) The applicant be advised, upon approval of Application No. 999050, of the requirement to obtain the necessary permits from the Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services.

Comments:

A fascia sign for the purpose of third party advertising is not permitted on a building historically listed by Council. There are two existing third party fascia signs on this building and they have been there for some time. The applicant is proposing to replace an existing third party fascia sign, on the south wall of the building. During discussions with staff, the applicant agreed that as a condition of approval he will remove the other existing third party advertising sign located on the north wall of the building.

The property is located north of College Street, on the west side of Yonge Street in a (CR) mixed-use zone district. The property contains a two-storey commercial building with retail uses at grade level. The building is listed by Council under the Ontario Heritage Act. The applicant is requesting permission to remove an existing “Zanzibar Tavern & Live Adult Entertainment” illuminated fascia sign and to erect a new illuminated fascia sign for third party advertising purposes on the south elevation of the building. The proposed sign is 5.50 metres long and 4.50 metres high, with an area of 24.75 m² (see Figure 1).

The sign does not comply with Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code in the following ways:

1. a fascia sign for the purpose of third party advertising is not permitted on a building historically listed by Council; and
2. the proposed fascia sign does not meet the required 60 metres separation distance from other third party signs in the surrounding area.

The first variance occurs because a fascia sign for the purpose of third party advertising is not permitted on a building historically listed by Council. In this instance, the replacement sign is designed to compliment and to improve the appearance of the south wall of the building. The proposed sign will be sufficiently set back from the building face, so as not to damage the cornice and corner returns. Further, the owner has agreed that as a condition of approval, he will remove the other existing third party fascia sign, from the north wall of the building, which is desirable.

With regard to the second variance, upon removal of the third party fascia sign from the north wall of the building, the second variance will no longer be required.

Staff of the Toronto Historical Board have reviewed the plans and have advised that they are acceptable.

I am recommending approval of this application with a condition requiring the removal of the third party fascia sign from north wall of the building prior to issuance of the necessary permits. I find the variances requested to be minor and within the general intent and purpose of the sign provisions of the Municipal Code.

Contact:

Norm Girdhar

Telephone: (416) 392-7209

Fax: (416) 392-0580

E-Mail: ngirdhar@city.toronto.on.ca

Insert Table/Map No. 1
480 Yonge Street

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480 Yonge Street

(October 7, 1999)

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations for an application for a minor variance to permit the owner to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the west building elevation at 89 St. George Street.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) That City Council approve Application No. 999068 for a minor variance from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit the owner to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the west building elevation at 89 St. George Street.
- (2) That the applicant be advised, upon approval of Application No. 999068, of the requirement to obtain the necessary permits from the Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services.

Comments:

The property is located on the east side of St. George Street, south of Bloor Street West, in a (Q) general institutional zone district. The property contains a three-storey listed historical building, known as the “Newman Centre”, with a restaurant, “Grabbajabba”, at the basement level.

The applicant is requesting permission to maintain an illuminated fascia sign, “Grabbajabba”, on the west building elevation. The sign is 3.78 metres long and 0.71 metre high, with an area of 2.68 m² (see Figure 1).

The sign does not comply with Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code in that the sign is not among the signs defined and permitted in a “General Institutional” (Q) zone district.

The individual letters which comprise the sign are mounted against a carrier box, which is mounted on two steel poles, which are, in turn, mounted against the wall of the building. The sign most closely resembles a fascia sign, except that it is not placed against the wall of the building. I consider this variance to be technical in nature and therefore acceptable.

It is my opinion that given its overall design and modest size, the sign does not impact the building, surrounding uses or the streetscape. Staff of the Toronto Historical Board have reviewed the plans and have advised that they are acceptable.

I am recommending approval of this application, as I find the variance requested to be minor and within the general intent and purpose of the sign provisions of the Municipal Code.

Contact:

Norm Girdhar
Telephone: (416) 392-7209
Fax: (416) 392-0580
E-Mail: ngirdhar@city.toronto.on.ca

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89 St. George Street

(October 18, 1999)

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations for an application for minor variances to permit the replacement of an existing legal non-conforming illuminated fascia sign, for third party advertising purposes, on the north-east elevation of the building at 280 Spadina Avenue.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications and impact statements resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council approve Application No. 999064 for minor variance from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit the replacement of an existing legal non-conforming illuminated fascia sign, for third party advertising purposes, on the north-east elevation of the building at 280 Spadina Avenue.
- (2) applicant be advised, upon approval of Application No. 999064, of the requirement to obtain the necessary permits from the Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services.

Comments:

The property is located on the south-west corner of Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street West in a (CR) mixed-use zone district. The property contains an 8-storey commercial building with retail uses at grade level. The applicant is requesting permission to remove an existing 21.44 m² illuminated fascia sign (Rotomatic Message Centre) and to erect a new (Electronic Message Centre) illuminated fascia sign for third party advertising purposes. The proposed sign is 5.08 metres long and 3.86 metres high, with an area of 19.61 m² (see Figure 1 & 2).

The sign does not comply with Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code in the following ways:

1. a fascia sign for third party advertising is not permitted in a (CR) mixed-use zone district, which faces a street;
2. a fascia sign containing electronic message display copy or animated copy is not permitted; and
3. the proposed sign will be erected above the second storey of the building and above 10 metres from grade, which is not permitted.

Fascia signs which contain electronic message display copy are prohibited in (CR) mixed-use zone districts to minimize conflict with the residential uses found both in and adjacent to the city's "Main Streets". I have recommended approval of such signs only for theatres, stadiums, large places of amusement, within the Yonge-Dundas area or in the financial district.

This sign would be slightly smaller, by 1.83 m², than the existing illuminated fascia sign with rotomatic message display that it replaces. Given the property's location at the heart of Chinatown, replacement of this sign is acceptable.

I am recommending approval of this application, as I find the variances requested to be minor and within the general intent and purpose of the sign provisions of the Municipal Code.

Contact:

Norm Girdhar

Telephone: (416) 392-7209

Fax: (416) 392-0580

E-Mail: ngirdhar@city.toronto.on.ca

Insert Table/Map No. 1
280 Spadina Avenue

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280 Spadina Avenue

(September 26, 1999)

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations for an application for a variance to permit the owner to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the west building elevation, one illuminated fascia sign on the north building elevation and one illuminated ground sign on the north-west corner of the property at 21 Davisville Avenue.

Recommendations:

- (1) That City Council approve Application No. 999048 for a variance to permit the owner to maintain, for identification purposes, one illuminated fascia sign on the west building elevation, one illuminated fascia sign on the north building elevation and one illuminated ground sign on the north-west corner of the property at 21 Davisville Avenue.
- (2) That the applicant be advised, upon approval of Application No. 999048, of the requirement to obtain the necessary permits from the Commissioner of Urban Planning and Development Services.

Comments:

The property is located on the south side of Davisville Avenue, in a mixed-use zone district. The property accommodates a single-storey building consisting of a laundromat and a vacant retail store.

The applicant is requesting permission to maintain an illuminated fascia sign “Laundry Express” on the west building elevation, an illuminated fascia sign “Laundromat” on the north building elevation and one illuminated ground sign on the north-west corner of the property. The fascia sign “Laundromat” is 5.47 metres long and 0.91 metre high with an area of 4.98 m², the fascia sign “Laundry Express ” is 2.07 metres long and 0.83 metre high, with an area of 1.72 m² and the ground sign is 2.44 metres long and 2.47 metres high with an area of 6.03 m² (see Figure 1).

The signs do not comply with Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code in that they are located less than 20 metres from a lot in a residential (R) zone district.

The Sign By-law requires illuminated signs to be erected a minimum distance of 20 metres from a lot line of any lot zoned for residential uses only. This provision is intended to reduce the impact of illumination on residential uses. In this instance the ground sign is located on the west side of the building and the fascia signs are oriented toward north and west respectively.

I am recommending approval of this application, as these signs will not be visible from the units in the apartment building located east of this property within the residential zone. The signs will be visible from east facing units in the adjacent condominium (converted office building) at the southeast corner of Davisville Avenue and Yonge Street, however, exposure to illuminated signage in mixed use zones is anticipated by the by-law and does not provide a reason for refusal of this application.

Contact:

Norm Girdhar

Telephone: (416) 392-7209

Fax: (416) 392-0580

E-Mail: ngirdhar@city.toronto.on.ca

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21 Davisville Avenue

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