

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

November 8, 2005

To: Toronto and East York Community Council

From: Richard Butts, (Acting) Executive Director
Municipal Licensing and Standards

Subject: Chapter 297, Signs By-law, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code and the Removal of Illegal Signs in the Toronto and East York Community Council Area

Purpose:

To report on the recommendation by City Council from its meeting held on September 28, 29, and 30, 2005, authorizing the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, to report to the Toronto and East York Community Council on November 15, 2005 regarding the number of illegal signs that have been removed, and provide recommendations on measures and sanctions to deter illegal signs.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

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

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Background:

At its meeting on September 28, 29 and 30, 2005, City Council gave consideration to a report about a variance from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code for 25 Bishop Tutu Boulevard (Toronto-Spadina, Ward 20). Consideration was also given for the removal of illegal signs in the Toronto and East York Community Council area.

Comments:

Municipal Licensing and Standards Investigations staff acted on several complaints received from the Members of Toronto and East York Community Council. A number of locations in the Community Council area, mostly in the downtown core, were identified as having façade signs that have been erected on the side(s) of the building. Furthermore, the Municipal Licensing and Standards Division has been in contact with interested parties to identify other locations in the Community Council area where these signs have been erected.

Chapter 297, Section 3, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code states that no person shall erect, display or alter a sign located within the City's boundaries unless a permit for the sign, under this chapter, has been obtained from the Commissioner. Permit applications are received and processed by Building Division staff.

Chapter 297, Section 8 which addresses the removal of unlawful signs, states that a notice of violation may be issued to any person who has erected and displayed or caused to be erected and displayed a sign without first having obtained a permit; or having obtained a permit, has caused to be erected and displayed a sign contrary to the approved plans in respect of which the permit was issued. The notice of violation shall require the person to make the sign comply within 14 days, failing which the Commissioner may cause the sign to be removed at the expense of the owner, and the City may recover the costs incurred by action or in like manner as municipal taxes. These enforcement actions, by District, are undertaken by Municipal Licensing and Standards Division Investigations staff.

Although none of the façade signs at the locations identified have been removed, Municipal Licensing and Standards Investigations staff are reviewing the permit status of these signs with Building Division staff before further enforcement actions are taken. Furthermore, the Division's Policy Unit is reviewing enforcement procedures with the goal of recommending measures and sanctions to deter illegal façade signs.

Conclusion:

The Municipal Licensing and Standards Division is committed to continue to identify locations with façade signs that have been erected without the benefit of a permit and take the necessary actions to ensure that these signs comply with the provisions set out in Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code.

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