

Sign Variance – 12 St Lawrence Street

Date:	May 13, 2009
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Toronto Building, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 28 – Toronto Centre-Rosedale
Reference Number:	P:\2009\Cluster B\BLD\Toronto and East York\2009TE039 09 108016 ZSV 00 ZR

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter for which the Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision.

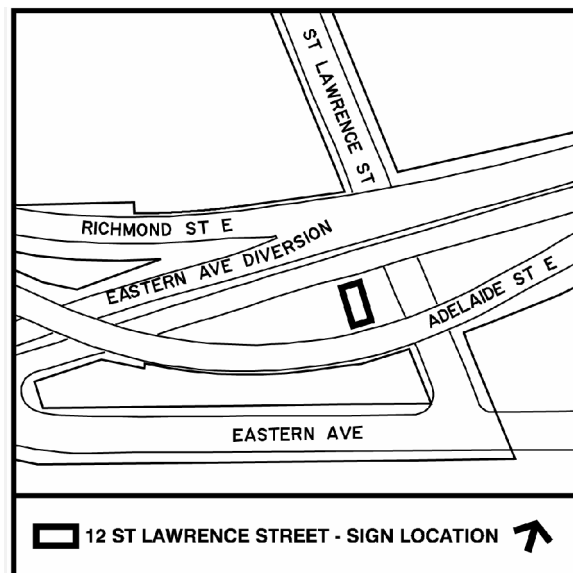
This report reviews and makes recommendations on a request by Adam Kelly of Kramer Design Associates on behalf of Astral Media for approval of variances from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit, for third party advertising purposes, a two face illuminated ground sign containing LED animated copy image board on each face of the sign and to remove an existing third party illuminated ground sign located on City-owned lands at 12 St. Lawrence Street.

Staff recommends refusal of this application. The variances are major and not within the general intent and purpose of the Municipal Code.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Toronto Building Division recommends that:

1. Toronto and East York Community Council refuse the request for variances to permit, for third party advertising purposes, a two face illuminated ground sign containing LED animated image board on each



face of the sign; and to remove the existing third party illuminated ground sign located at 12 St. Lawrence Street.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The property is located on a vacant piece of city land within the Public Right of Way allowance bounded by Richmond St. and Eastern Ave. diversion ramps to the north, St. Lawrence Street to the east and Adelaide Street East ramp to the south. The property is located in an RA zone. The applicant is seeking permission to install, for third party advertising purposes, a two face illuminated ground sign containing LED animated copy image board on each face of the sign and to remove an existing third party illuminated ground sign located on City-owned lands at 12 St. Lawrence Street. The proposed ground sign is 19.38m high above grade and would have an area of 47.36m².

The sign does not comply with Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code in the following ways:

Sign By-law Section and Requirements	Applicant's Proposal	Required Variance
1. Chapter 297-10D (8)	To erect an illuminated two face ground sign containing an LED animated image board for third party advertising purposes.	A ground sign, for third party advertising purposes, in an RA zone not permitted.
2. Chapter 297-10D (8)	The proposed two face ground sign would contain an LED animated copy board.	A ground sign that contains an animated copy is not permitted.
3. Chapter 297-10D (8)	The proposed ground sign would have an area of 47.36m ² .	The 47.36m ² sign area would exceed by 22.36m ² , the maximum 25.0m ² sign area permitted.

COMMENTS

The proposed sign will consist of a full LED screen with the ability to electronically change its copy at specific intervals. The applicant has advised that the copy being displayed on the video screen will not have motion and will change at the same rate as a tri-vision sign. Toronto Building has reviewed the proposal against the provisions of Chapter 297 and has made a determination that the proposed sign will contain animated copy as defined in the by-law. Variance number two noted above reflects this deficiency to the by-law as any sign containing an LED animated image copy is not permitted.

The first variance requested is with respect to the proposed replacement of a third party ground sign with a newly designed third party two face ground sign containing an LED animated copy image board on each face of the sign. A ground sign, for third party advertising purposes, in an RA zone not permitted. The regulations are aimed at reducing proliferation of third party signs in the mixed-use zone districts.

Also, the Sign By-law regulates the size and height of ground signs in order to mitigate any adverse impact the signs may have on the surrounding uses or on the streetscape. In this case, the height of sign from grade to the top of sign is almost twice the permitted height and the area of sign also substantially exceeds the permitted size.

The city wide Sign By-law team is in the process of analysing the impact of LED animated image type signs and are developing standards which would regulate the intensity of illumination, frequency of copy change, setbacks, separation distance between signs and their appropriate location. Granting approval of this application prior to the adoption of the new city wide Sign By-law may result in Toronto and East York Community Council permitting a type of sign which may not be in compliance with the signage standards eventually approved in the new Sign By-law.

The staff at the Transportation Services Division has advised that they have reviewed the proposal and have concluded that the proposed third party ground sign at this location should be refused as the road configuration at this location requires a complete driver attention and the location and changing characteristics of the sign may cause sufficient distractions to create an unsafe situation. Furthermore, the proposed sign at this location may be visible to the motorists driving on the Don Valley Parkway and with the current moratorium on installing animated signs along the Don Valley Parkway this application should be refused.

This application clearly contradicts the City's prohibition of third party ground signs containing a LED animated copy image boards in RA zones. Allowing a third party ground sign containing an LED animated copy, by way of minor variance application, will undermine the intent of City policy and it would not maintain the integrity and spirit of the Municipal Code. Staff recommends refusal of this application. The variances are major and not within the general intent and purpose of the Municipal Code.

CONTACT

Norm Girdhar, Assistant Planner
Tel. No. 416-392-7209
Fax No. 416-392-7536
E-mail: ngirdhar@toronto.ca

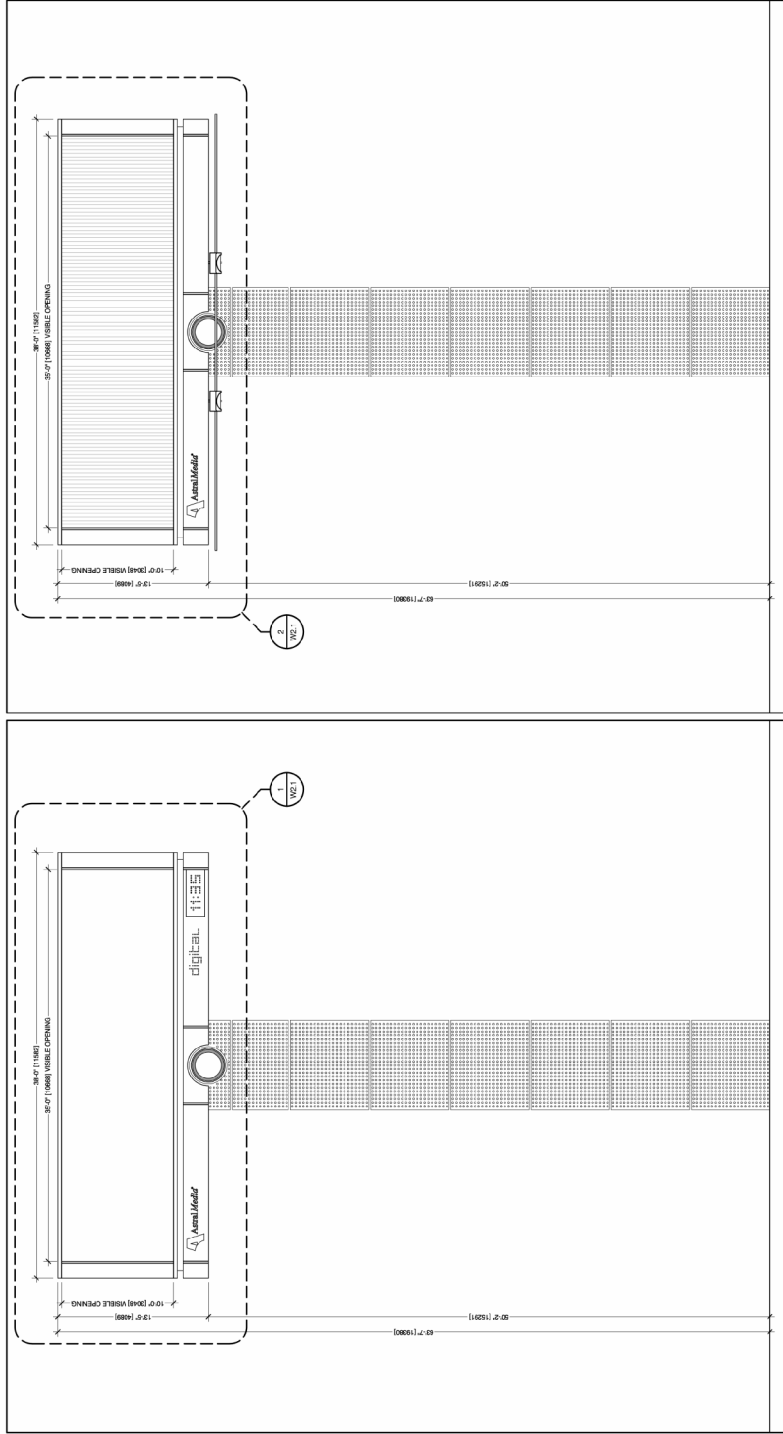
SIGNATURE

Jim Laughlin, Deputy Chief Building Official and Director, Toronto Building
Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Elevation
Attachment 2: Elevation
Attachment 3: Plan and Perspective

Attachment 1: Elevations



East Elevation

West Elevation

12 St. Lawrence Street

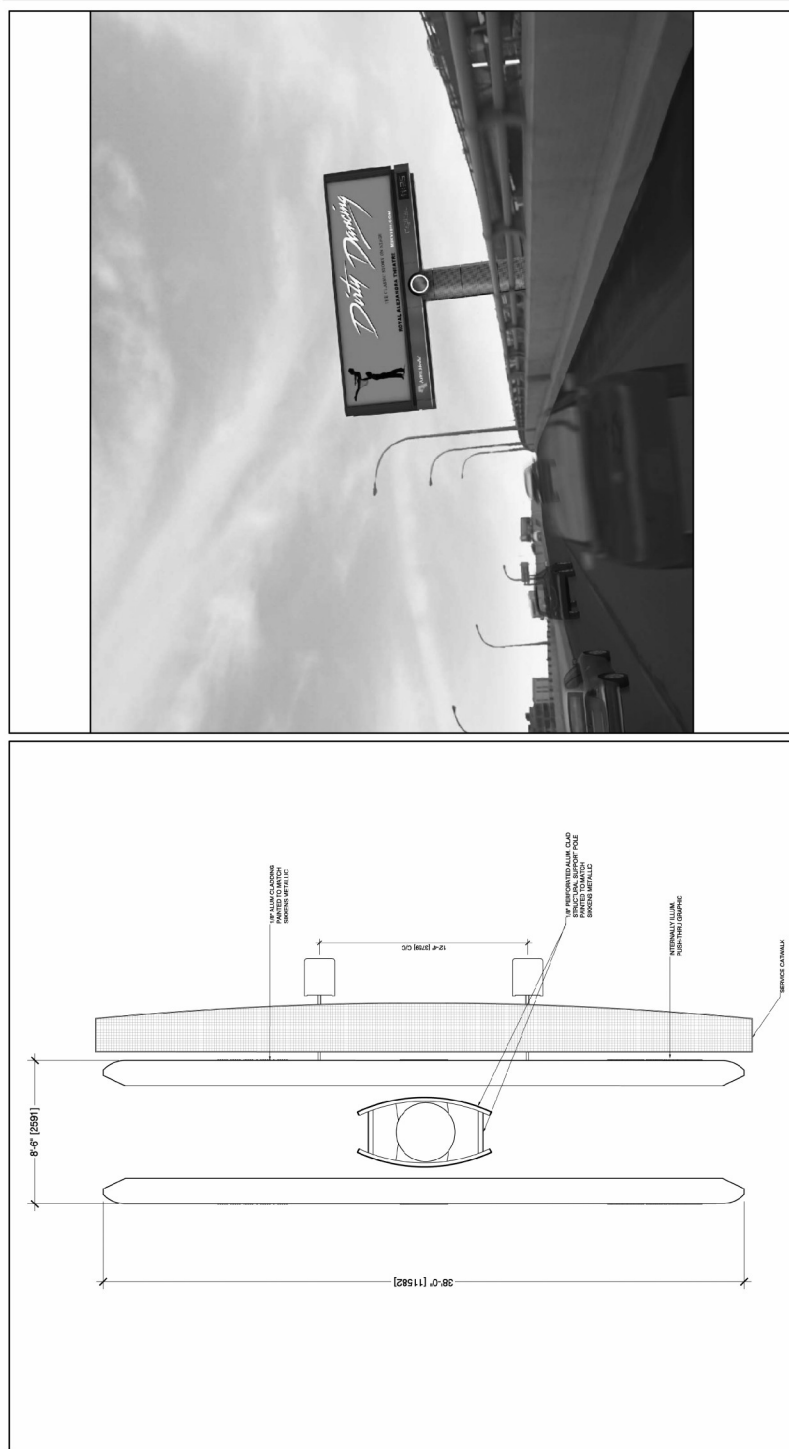
Elevations

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
05/28/2009

File # 09_108016

Attachment 2: Elevations



Perspective

Plan

12 St. Lawrence Street

Elevations

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
05/28/2009

File # 09_108016

Attachment 3: Plan and Perspective



East Elevation



West Elevation

12 St. Lawrence Street

Plan & Perspective

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
05/28/2009

File # 09_108016