

Sign Variance - 2 St Clair Ave W

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| Date: | March 4, 2010 |
| To: | Toronto and East York Community Council |
| From: | Director, Toronto Building, Toronto and East York District |
| Wards: | Ward 22 – St. Paul's |
| Reference Number: | 2010TE031 09 178768 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.

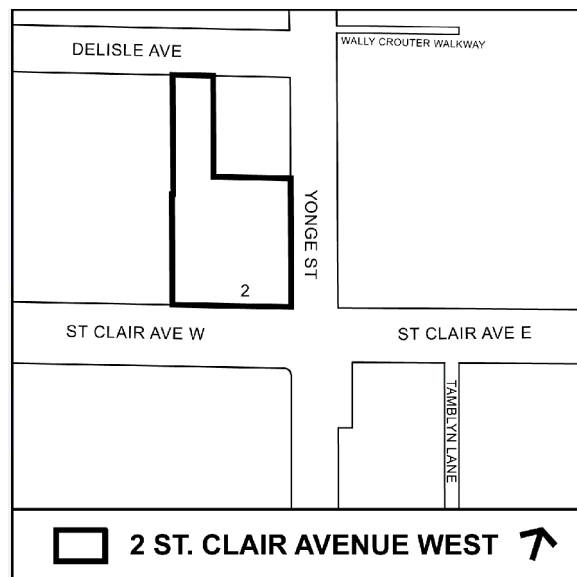
This report reviews and makes recommendations on a request by Adam Kelly with Kramer Design Associates, on behalf of Astral Media, for approval of variances from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit, for identification purposes, replacement of three existing illuminated fascia signs with four newly designed illuminated fascia signs at the second floor level, on the southeast corner of the parapet wall of the building at 2 St. Clair Avenue West.

Staff recommends refusal of the application. The variances are not minor 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 requested variances to permit, for identification purposes, replacement of three existing illuminated fascia signs with four newly designed illuminated fascia signs at the



second floor level, on the southeast corner of the parapet wall of the building at 2 St. Clair Avenue West.

Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The property is located at the northwest corner of Yonge and St. Clair Avenue in a CR zone. The property contains a 21-storey office building with retail uses at the grade level. The Astral Media is a major tenant in the building. The four illuminated existing fascia signs are located at the second floor level parapet wall on the southeast corner of the building. As a part of re-branding of their corporate identity, the applicant is now seeking permission to remove the three existing fascia signs and to replace them with four newly designed fascia signs at the second floor level, on the southeast corner of re-designed parapet wall of the building (see attached graphics). Each fascia sign facing east and south is 3.2m wide and 0.8m high with an area of 2.56m². The proposed “Astro Media” sign on the southeast corner is 1.3m wide and 0.34m high with an area of 0.44m². The proposed electronic static sign on the southeast corner is 6.81m wide and 2.0m high with an area of 13.62m². The height from grade to the top of the of the small Astro Media fascia sign is slightly higher than 10.0m. The height from grade to the top of the electronic static fascia sign is 9.91m (see attached graphics).

The signs do 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 297-11AA(2)(a) | The two fascia signs, facing east and south each would be 0.8m high and the electronic static fascia sign would be 2.0m high and would contain letter exceeding a vertical dimension of 0.5m. | A fascia sign containing any graphics or letters with vertical dimension exceeding 0.5m is not permitted. |
| 2. Chapter 297-11AA(2)(c) | The height of the proposed fascia signs above grade exceeds the permitted height of 7.5m. | A fascia sign located more than 7.5 m high above grade is not permitted in this area. |
| 3. Chapter 297-11AA(2)(e) | Three illuminated fascia signs in part or full would face flanking (Yonge St.) street. | An illuminated fascia sign facing flanking street is not permitted. |

COMMENTS

The proposed signs are replacement signs at this location on the building to identify a major media tenant in the building. This property is within The Yonge – St. Clair Part II Plan which directs that signage should contribute to the attractiveness of the area.

Although, variances are required with respect to the vertical dimensions of the letters in the proposed signs, the height of the signs being greater than 7.5m above grade and three signs facing the flanking street (Yonge Street), the signs are designed, sized and positioned to complement the building façade.

Toronto Building Staff have circulated this application to Transportation Services for their review and have provided the following comments:

“2 St Clair Avenue West is located at the corner of St. Clair Avenue West and Yonge Street. There is a dedicated streetcar platform along St. Clair with 2 lanes of traffic in each direction. Yonge Street also has 2 lanes of traffic in each direction. There are left and right turn restrictions on St. Clair Ave. and also Yonge St. The intersection handles a high volume of pedestrians. The area of the proposed electronic signs far exceeds the area of the traffic signals within the intersection and therefore provides a potential distraction to drivers who may "lose" the traffic signal within the proposed sign.

There is a lot of information that must be comprehended by the driver (transit priority, turn restrictions, heavy pedestrian volume, etc.), that requires their undivided attention. The proposed signs have the potential to be a distraction to the driver and also pedestrians and cyclist. Given these comments, the Traffic Safety Unit is recommending the signs not be approved.”

Although the design of the proposed sign blends in well with the building façade, Staff cannot support the requested variance as the resulting sign would likely create health and safety issue to motorists and pedestrians.

CONTACT

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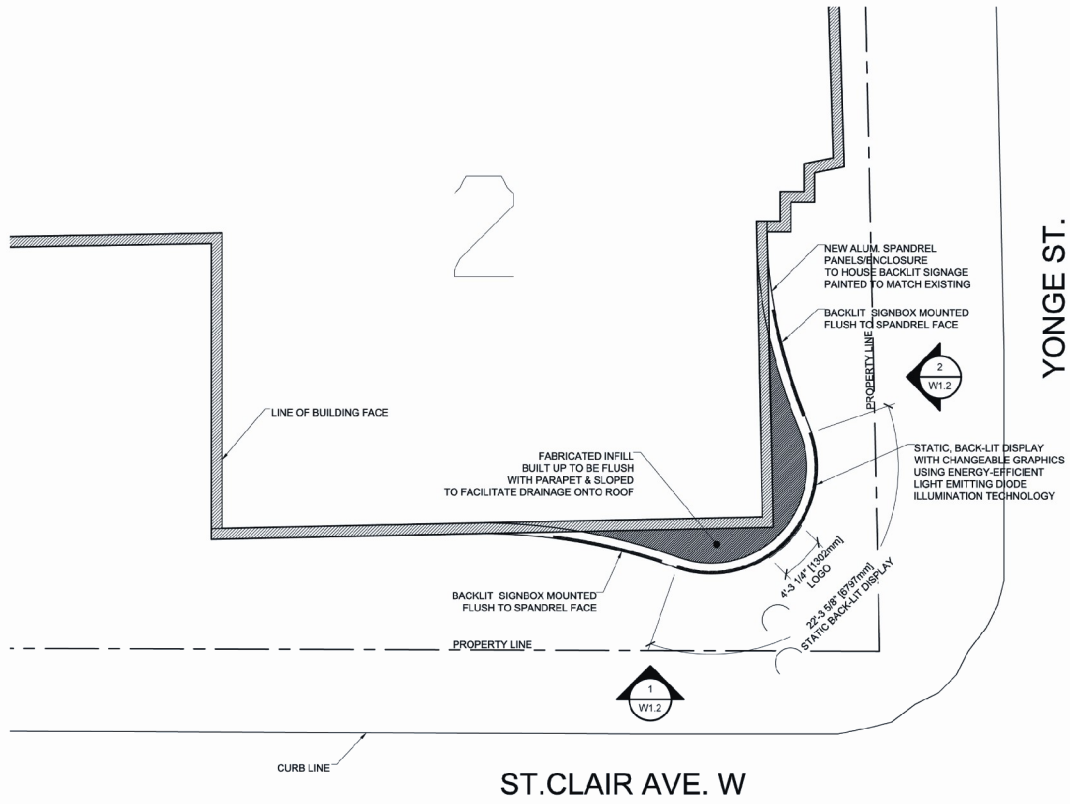
SIGNATURE

Mario Angelucci, Acting Director, Toronto Building
Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Site Plan
Attachment 2: Elevation
Attachment 3: Elevations
Attachment 4: Elevations

Attachment 1: Site Plan



Site Plan

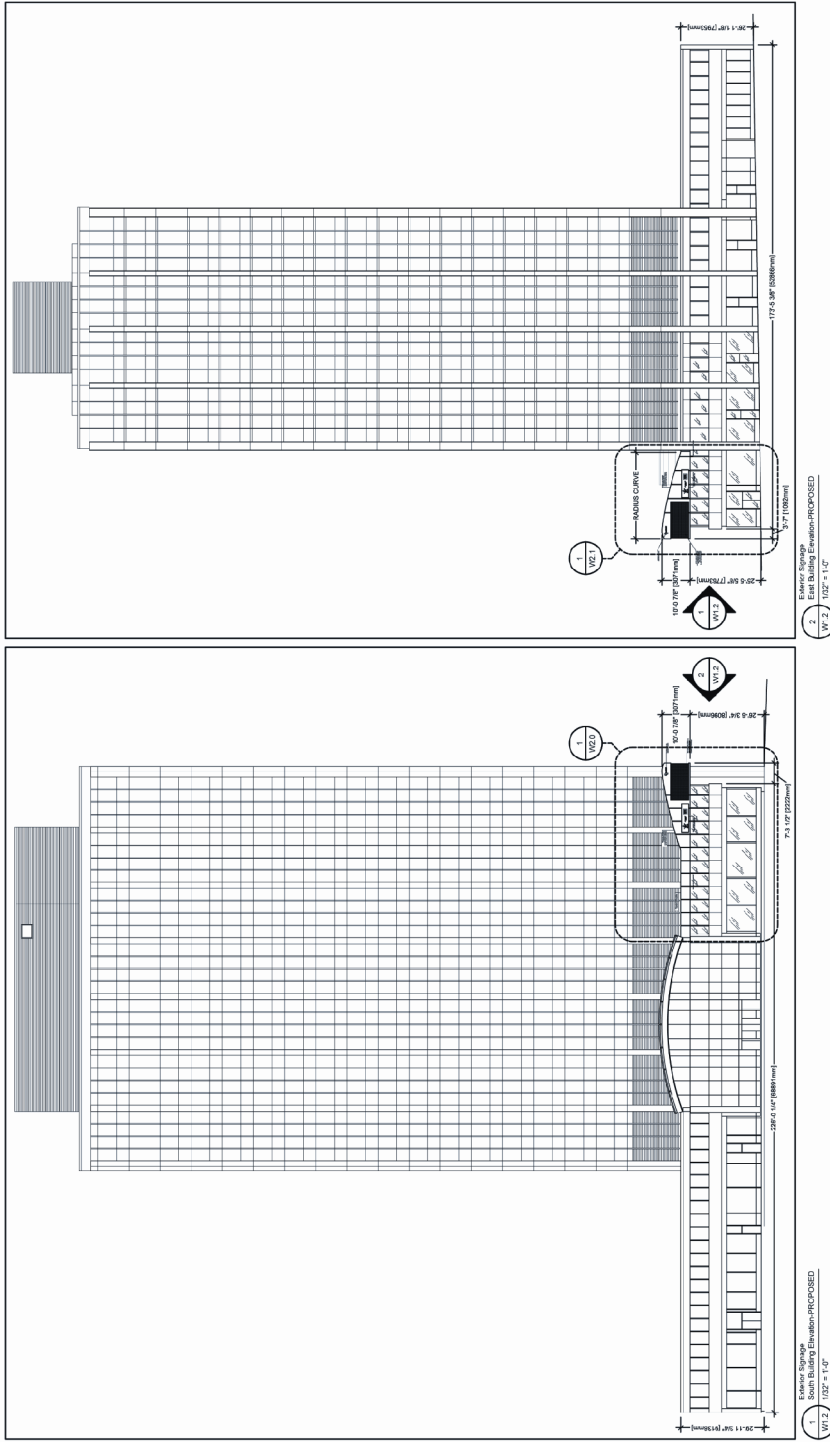
2 St. Clair Avenue West

Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale 
02/18/10

File # 09_178768

Attachment 2: Elevations



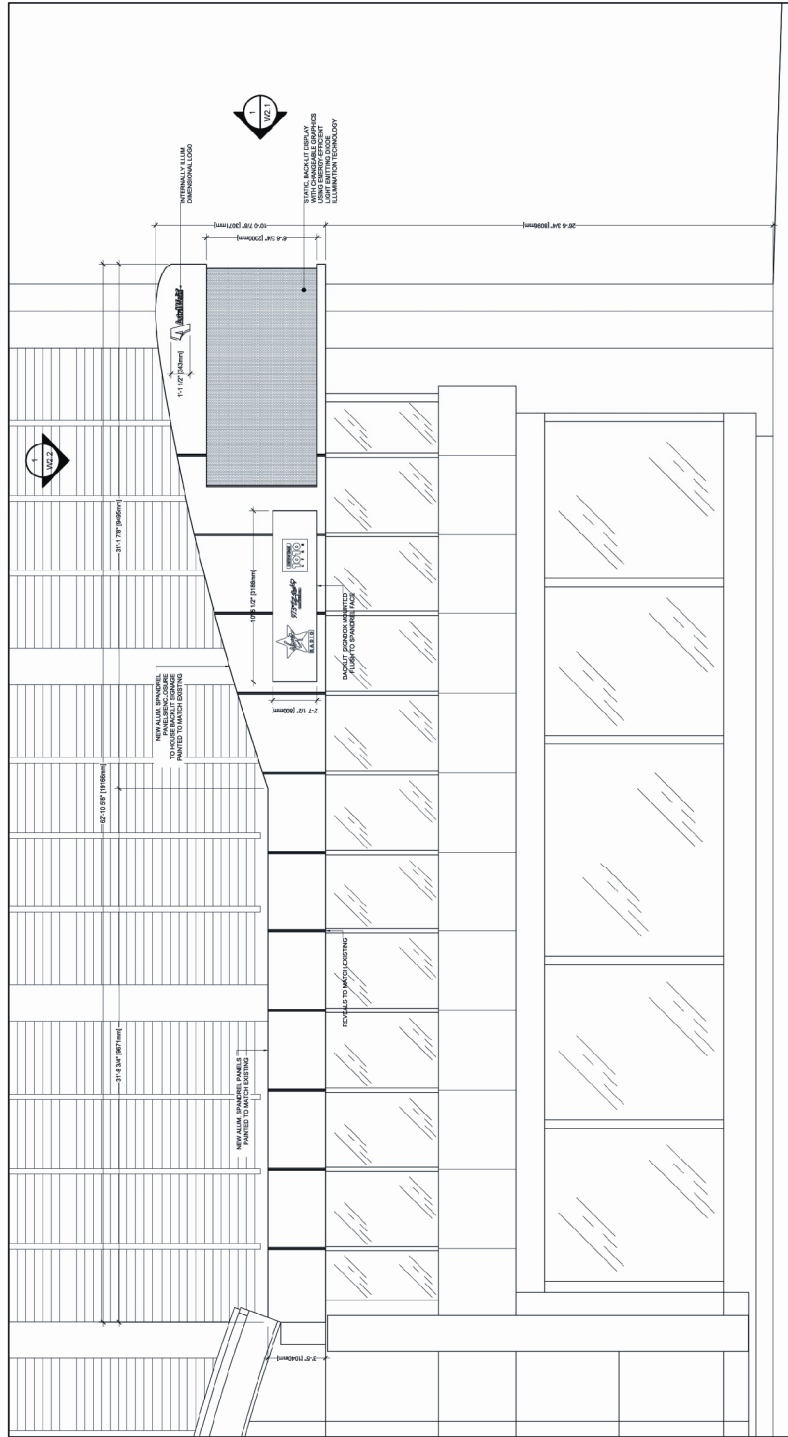
2 St. Clair Avenue East

File # 09_178768

Elevations
 Applicant's Submitted Drawing

Not to Scale
 02/18/10

Attachment 3: Elevations



2 St. Clair Avenue East

Elevations
 Applicant's Submitted Drawing

File # 09_178768

Not to Scale
 02/18/10

