

Sign Variance - 727 Bloor St W

Date:	February 19, 2010
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Toronto Building, Toronto and East York District
Wards:	Ward 19 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number:	2010TE070 10 120187 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 Steve Wolowich of Astral Media Outdoor, L.P., on behalf of Stamatina Demos for approval of variances from Chapter 297, Signs, of the former City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit, for third party advertising purposes, replacement of an existing “V- shape” illuminated roof sign with a newly designed illuminated “V-shape” roof sign containing a horizontally rotating scroll attribute, on a two-storey building at 727 Bloor Street West.

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:

Toronto and East York Community Council refuse the request for variances permit, for third party advertising purposes, replacement of an “V- shape” illuminated roof sign with a newly designed illuminated “V-shape” roof sign containing a horizontally rotating scroll attribute, on a two-storey building at 727 Bloor Street West.



Financial Impact

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The property is located east of Grace Street on the south side of Bloor Street West in an MCR zone. The property contains a two-storey building with retail uses at grade level. The applicant is seeking permission to replace, for third party advertising purposes, an existing illuminated roof sign with a newly designed illuminated roof sign containing a horizontally rotating scroll copy attribute, on a two-storey building at 727 Bloor Street West.

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 (16)	To install a roof sign containing a horizontally rotating scroll attribute, for third party advertising purposes, in an MCR zone.	A third party roof sign in an MCR zone is not permitted.
2. Chapter 297-10.B.(2)	To install, for third party advertising purposes, a "V-Shape" roof sign containing a horizontally rotating scroll copy attribute. The sign would also display an electronic message time of the day at the base of the sign.	Unless specifically permitted by other provisions of this chapter, signs that rotate or which contain tri-vision panels, animated copy, changeable copy or electronic message display copy are not permitted.
3. Chapter 297-10E	The proposed illuminated roof sign is located less than 20.0m from a lot in R zone.	An illuminated third party sign located less than 20.0m from a lot in R zone is not permitted.
4. Chapter 297-10F (1)	The sign is located less than 60.0m from other third party signs located in the vicinity.	A third party sign is required to have a separation distance of minimum 60.0m from other third party sign in the vicinity.

COMMENTS

At its meeting of April 24, 1995, City Council passed By-law 1995-0229 to amend Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code to prohibit roof signs in all mixed-use CR, MCR and RA zone districts in the former City of Toronto. The prohibition resulted from a study of signage along the City's "Main Streets" which detailed the unattractive appearance of roof signs within the mixed-use zone districts and from adjacent residential districts as well as the negative effect on skyline views. The By-law does not permit the replacement of the attributes of the signs, so as not to prolong their life span. In this instance, the proposal to replace the existing illuminated roof sign with a newly designed illuminated roof sign containing a horizontally rotating scroll copy attribute at 727 Bloor Street West, which is not permitted under the current by-law.

The variances are required because the proposed replacement third party sign is not permitted in an MCR zone, The proposed sign would contain rotating scroll copy attribute which is not permitted, the sign is located more than permitted height of 10.0m above grade and the sign would also be located less than 20.0m from a lot in R zone which is not permitted. Also, the third party roof sign does not meet the required 60.0m separation distance from other third party signs located in the vicinity.

Staff can advise that roof signs under the new sign by-law recently approved by Council are a specifically prohibited sign type and accordingly any approval under the new sign by-law would require a site specific amendment and could not be approved under the variance process.

This application clearly contradicts the City's prohibition of roof signs and its clear objective to prohibit this type of signage under the current by-law. It is staff's opinion that permitting an illuminated, scrolling type displayable copies, for third party advertising purposes, by way of a minor variance application would undercut the clear intent of City policy and would undermine the integrity and the spirit of the Municipal Code.

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

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SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Sign Details

