



REPORT FOR ACTION

Site-Specific Amendment to the Sign By-law 440 Front Street West

Date: December 28, 2017
To: Planning and Growth Management Committee
From: Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building (Interim)
Wards: 20 - Trinity-Spadina

SUMMARY

This report recommends approval of a Site-Specific Amendment to the Sign By-law for the property at 440 Front Street West, at the north-west corner of Front Street and Spadina Avenue (the former Globe and Mail site).

The property is the subject of a development application which consists of seven mixed-use buildings and associated underground parking. The consortium of developers who are involved in the project refer to the development as 'The Well'.

In December 2016, as a result of the re-development of the site, Toronto Building received an application to amend the Sign By-law to permit a combination of first party wall, ground, projecting and overhanging structure signs and third party electronic signs along Front Street and Spadina Avenue. Through consultations with City Planning and Transportation Services, Toronto Building established a number of objectives to review against the applicant's proposals. The recommended site-specific amendment is consistent with these objectives and the intent of the Sign By-law.

This report also responds to a direction from the Planning and Growth Management Committee ("PGM") to review the sign regulations for the area surrounding the intersection of Front Street and Spadina Avenue, and identify any potential amendments to the Sign By-law to accommodate present and future developments, including the creation of a Special Sign District.

This report has been prepared in consultation with staff from City Planning and Transportation Services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Building Official and Executive Director, Toronto Building, recommends that:

1. City Council approve the application to amend the Sign By-law to add a site-specific amendment to Schedule 'B' of Chapter 694, Signage Master Plans and Area Specific

Amendments, to establish regulations for the premises municipally known as 440 Front Street West, described in Attachment 1 to this report; and,

2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to prepare the necessary Bills for introduction in Council to implement the above recommendation, subject to such stylistic and technical changes to the draft by-law as may be required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

PG 21.15 - Sign Study: Spadina-Front

At its May 31, 2017 meeting, PGM requested that the Chief Building Official (CBO), in consultation with adjacent Business Improvement Areas, the Ward Councillor, local businesses, property owners and neighbours, review the signage regulations for the area surrounding the intersection of Spadina Avenue and Front Street West, and report back on amendments to the Sign By-law to address the needs and the impacts of signage arising from current and future development, including the potential for a new Special Sign District.

(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.PG21.15>)

COMMENTS

The regulations contained in the proposed site-specific amendment reflect considerable input and feedback through consultation with a team of staff in City Planning, Transportation Services and the Design Architect. This team established overall objectives in order to allow first and third party signs that complement the development and reflect Planning, Transportation and Sign By-law objectives for this location. The objectives included minimizing signage impacts on heritage properties, adjacent parkland, traffic and residential uses. The resulting regulations meet the City's overall objectives as well as the applicant's needs for this site, including identification and way finding to guide visitors towards residences and uses on site.

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENT

The proposed site-specific amendment to the Sign By-law establishes regulations that would allow a variety of first and third party signs at this location to allow the following signs:

- Two wall signs at the corner of Front Street and Spadina Avenue to identify the development
- Six first party projecting signs along the Wellington Street elevation;
- Six upper-storey wall signs for identification of office tenants throughout the development
- A combination of 46 wall, overhanging structure and projecting signs located on the first three storeys of various buildings, identifying retail and other business tenants
- Five electronic ground signs located near pedestrian entrances to The Well
- Three third party signs (two electronic wall signs and one electronic projecting sign).

Along with much of the surrounding area, this site is designated by the Sign By-law as a Commercial Residential Sign District (CR). Many of the regulations in the proposed site-specific amendment (Attachment 1 to this report) are similar to those found in a CR Sign District; however, where the signs would not otherwise comply or be permitted by the current regulations, this amendment permits signs that reflect the use, size and scale of the proposed buildings on the site and their orientation relative to open spaces within the development and surrounding area.

SPECIAL SIGN DISTRICT STUDY

In May 2017, staff was directed by PGM to consider the creation of a new Special Sign District for the area surrounding the intersection of Spadina Avenue and Front Street. A review by staff determined that the area lacked features which would normally contribute to the creation of a Special Sign District. These features include a noticeable concentration or absence of signs or a concentration of certain sign or building types.

Staff concluded that, at this time, a new Special Sign District for this area is not recommended.

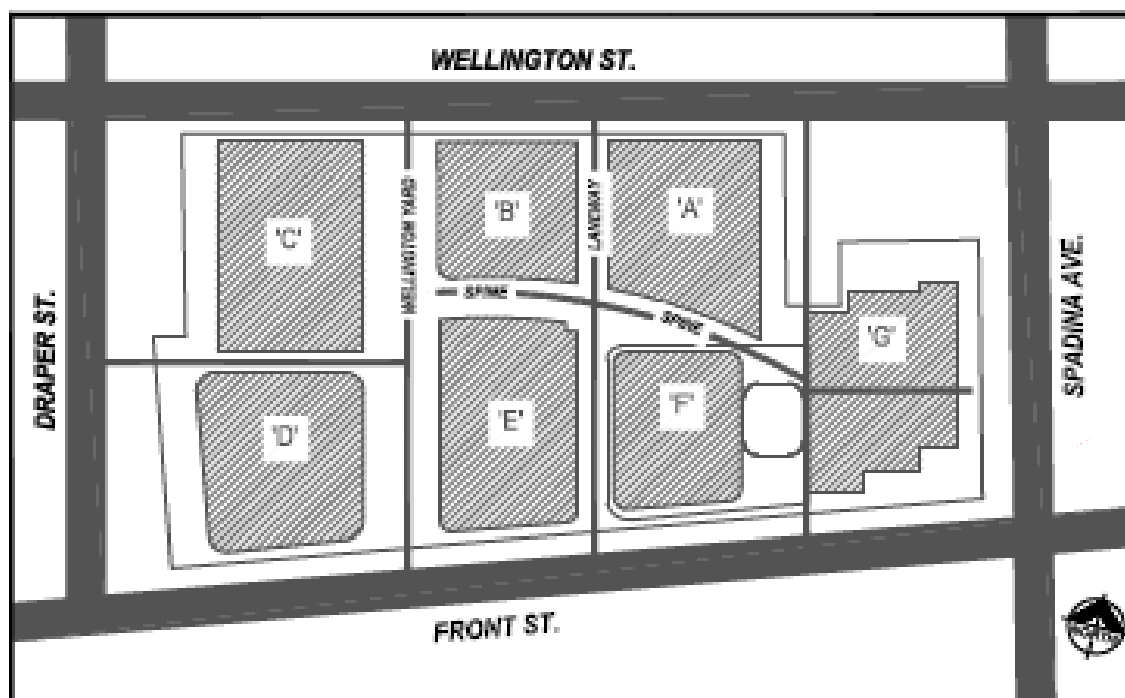
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA

The Well includes substantial residential, office and retail components. All of the proposed buildings on the site will include at least two of these three uses. The buildings would also include a podium and a taller building element, with a retail component within the first two storeys.

The first underground level would also include a lower concourse containing retail uses and loading facilities. A substantial portion of the site is dedicated to open space which provides pedestrian access to the multiple levels of retail units on the site. Figure 1 depicts the layout of the buildings at The Well and their relationship to the surrounding area.

Buildings along Front Street will include an office component within the base building. All of the buildings, except for the proposed office tower at the corner of Front Street and Spadina Avenue, would include a residential component located in the taller portion of the buildings.

Figure 1 - Location of "The Well" Development



The Draper Street Heritage Conservation District ("HCD") is located to the west of the site. The HCD lands are designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The balance of the lands in the King-Spadina Secondary Plan to the west, north and east of the site, are included in the King-Spadina HCD Plan, adopted by City Council at its October 2017 meeting. This plan is currently under appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Although 440 Front Street is located outside of the HCDs, the recommended amendment would establish regulations so that the proposed signs at this location would transition into the adjacent Draper Street HCD and have minimal impacts on the properties in the King-Spadina HCD to the north and east. Further, the recommended site-specific amendment minimizes the impact on Clarence Park to the north-east of the development.

PROPOSED FIRST PARTY SIGN REGULATIONS

First party signs will identify the development and the retail, office and residential uses at 440 Front Street. Although the majority of the signs will only be visible from within the development, a number of the proposed signs can be seen from the surrounding area.

The first party signs, visible from the surrounding area, fit into three categories:

1. Two large Identification Wall Signs identifying 'The Well', on the building in zone G
2. Six Office Identification Wall Signs on the upper-most storeys of buildings displaying corporate symbols and logos in zones D, E, F and G
3. A series of Tenant Identification Signs located on the lower storeys of buildings identifying retail and other uses on all buildings.

Regulations for Identification Wall Signs

Two illuminated wall signs will mark the primary entrances to the property and will be visible from all directions. The proposed signs would be restricted to the south and east façades of the proposed building in zone 'G'.

Through the proposed regulations, the content of the two large illuminated wall signs marking the entrance will be restricted to logos and words identifying 'The Well'. The amendment establishes regulations consistent with the size and height requirements of the Sign By-law for illuminated wall signs.

Figure 2 - Identification Wall Sign



Regulations for Office Identification Wall Signs

Figure 3 shows a typical rendering of the proposed Office Identification Wall Signs.

The primary departure from the existing regulations would be to allow signs displaying a logo or corporate symbol to be displayed on a building having less than 10 storeys.

Also, due to the reduced height of the upper-most storey walls on the building in zone 'G', the wall signs on the upper-most storey of that building will occupy up to 40% of the wall area. The remaining will be consistent with the Sign By-law, occupying 20% of the wall area.

Figure 3 - Typical Office Identification Wall Sign



It should be noted that the Globe and Mail building previously located on the premises contained similar signs at a similar height from grade. Due to previously applicable regulations or variances granted from the current Sign By-law, it is also common to see signs at comparable heights and sizes in this area.

Regulations for Tenant Identification Signs

The proposed amendment contains regulations to permit Tenant Identification Signs consistent with the Sign By-law requirements for first party signs in a Commercial Residential Sign District. See Figure 4 for examples of proposed Tenant Identification Signs.

The proposed regulations depart from the standard Commercial Residential Sign District regulations by eliminating the requirement for signs to generally decrease in sign face area as they increase in height from grade.

It is the CBO's opinion that regulations allowing these signs to display the same sign face area at the first, second and third storeys of buildings at 440 Front Street is suitable due to the nature of the design and layout of 'The Well'.

Regulations for Tenant Projecting Signs

The recommended amendment would allow for six first party projecting signs. The proposed signs will be located along the Wellington Street frontage on the second storey, and have two sign faces perpendicular to Wellington Street.

If adopted, the site-specific amendment would permit a maximum sign face area of 11 square meters for projecting signs. The size of the projecting signs is appropriate due to the absence of ground signs along the Wellington Street frontage. Projecting signs promotes a more pedestrian friendly environment and minimizes sign clutter.

Regulations for Electronic Ground Signs

The proposed site-specific amendment would establish regulations for five electronic ground signs, with sign face area and height requirements consistent with ground signs in

Figure 4 - Typical Tenant Identification Signs



Figure 5 - Typical Electronic Ground Sign



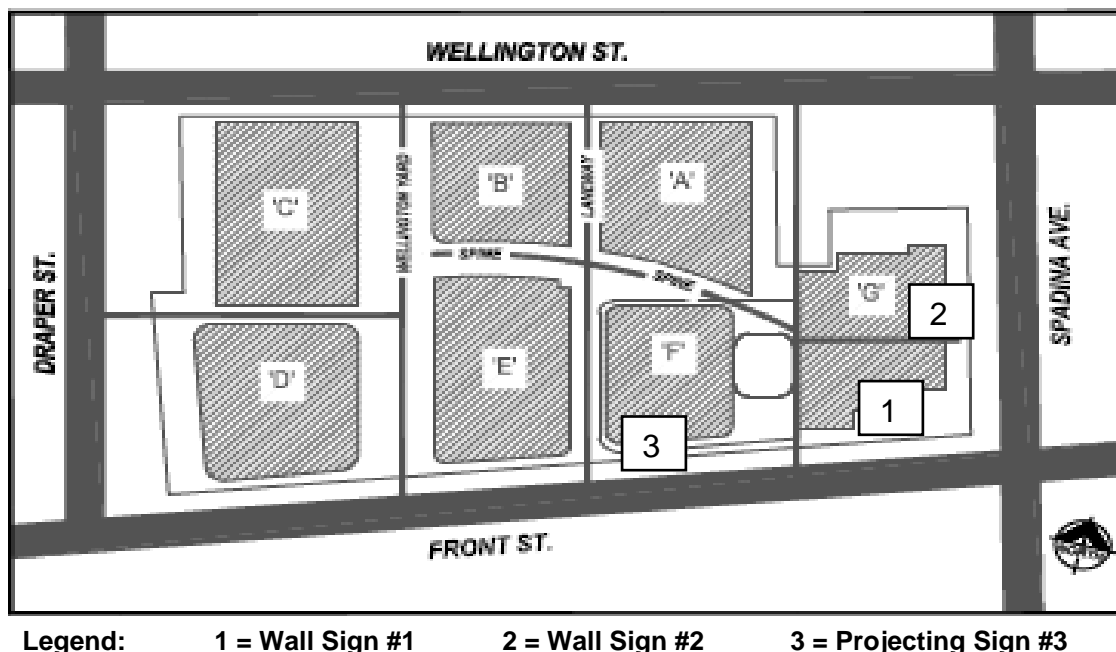
Commercial Residential Sign Districts (See Figure 5 for an example of a typical electronic ground sign).

The regulations would require the electronic ground signs to be located near the proposed pedestrian entrances for 'The Well'. These signs have been positioned to not impede pedestrian flow, and are designed to act as way-finding devices that display both static and electronic sign copy.

PROPOSED THIRD PARTY SIGN REGULATIONS

The proposed site-specific amendment would allow for three third party electronic signs, specifically, two electronic wall signs displayed on the Building in zone 'G', and one electronic projecting sign displayed on the Building in zone 'F'. See Figure 6 below for the locations of the two wall signs (#1 and #2) and the projecting sign (#3).

Figure 6 - Approximate Locations of Proposed Third Party Electronic Signs



The third party electronic signs proposed in this site-specific amendment would comply with the illumination provisions contained in the Sign By-law, which require each sign to be turned off between 11pm and 7am.

The amendment would allow the signs to be used for third party advertising as well as sign copy display that would provide information about events and promotions taking place at The Well.

Regulations for Electronic Wall Signs

The site-specific amendment would require Wall Sign #1 to be located on the Building in zone 'G' and face the Front-Spadina intersection, and Wall Sign #2 to be located on the Building in zone 'G' and face Spadina Avenue.

Both signs would be located below the second storey of the building and be located a minimum of 40 metres from surrounding residential uses (both current and proposed). It is the CBO's opinion that the proposed site-specific amendment regulations will minimize the impacts of these wall signs on the surrounding area.

Wall Sign #1 Located at Front-Spadina Intersection:

This sign will have a maximum sign face area of 98.8 square metres and will be integrated into the overall building façade such that it is compatible with the architectural building design (See Figure 7 for an illustration of this sign). The proposed site-specific amendment would require the sign to face the Front-Spadina intersection and be displayed along both property frontages to form a gateway feature to the proposed development.

Due to the integration of the sign into the curved building wall, as well as the placement of a column between the sign and the Front-Spadina intersection, the entire sign face area of this sign will not be visible at any one time.

The sign will be more pedestrian-oriented than other third party signs in the area, as it will be located at the first storey and is intended to function as wayfinding for The Well. The sign will also animate the streetscape along Spadina Avenue and Front Street.

Wall Sign #2 Located Along Spadina Avenue:

This sign will have a single rectangular sign face measuring no more than 13.25 metres horizontally and 3.65 metres vertically. (See Figure 8 for an illustration of this sign.) This sign will be located at the north end of the Building in zone 'G', facing Spadina Avenue.

Similar to Wall Sign #1, this sign will further animate the streetscape along Spadina Avenue and also be pedestrian-oriented. This sign face was designed to be integrated and set behind the vertical fins of the façade near the northern entrance to The Well. In order to

Figure 7 - Proposed Electronic Wall Sign at Front-Spadina Intersection (Wall Sign #1)



Figure 8 - Electronic Wall Sign facing Spadina Avenue (Wall Sign #2)



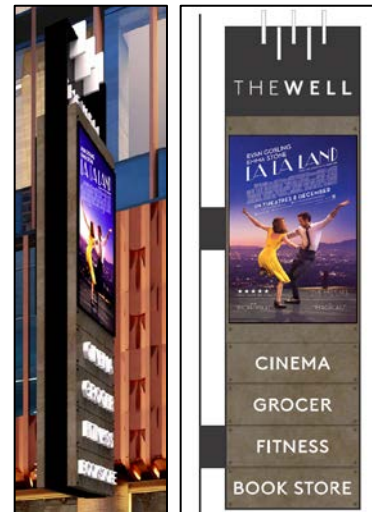
reduce the impact of the sign on the HCD to the north of the development, the sign will be located approximately two metres from the heritage building to the north. In addition, the sign has be located in such a manner that it will have limited visibility from Clarence Park to the east of the development.

Regulations for the Electronic Projecting Sign

The site-specific amendment would allow The Well to contain an electronic projecting sign located along the Front Street frontage of the building in zone 'F', containing both first and third party copy. (See Figure 6 for the location of this sign).

As this sign is partly located within the Front Street right-of-way, it will be subject to further review and approval by Transportation Services.

Figure 9 - Electronic Projecting Sign on Front Street (Projecting Sign #3)



The electronic projecting sign will have two sign faces in a back-to-back configuration with a maximum sign face area of 44.5 square metres, and be located at the second storey of the building in zone 'F'. The third party electronic advertising will be limited to 37 percent of the overall sign face area. The remaining portion of the sign will display first party copy. As such, the electronic sign face will be secondary to the static portion of the sign. (See Figure 9 for an illustration of the proposed electronic projecting sign.)

Although the projecting sign will be larger than what is generally permitted, there are a number of large projecting signs elsewhere in the downtown core that have been permitted by variance or previous by-laws. The electronic portion of the sign will be secondary to the identification portion, and the CBO is of the opinion that the proposed projecting sign is suitable for the buildings at 440 Front Street.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A public consultation session was held on the evening of April 25, 2017. All properties within 250 metres of The Well were notified of the application and the consultation session. No one from the community was in attendance and no other objections to the proposal have been received to date.

CONCLUSION

It is the CBO's opinion that the proposed regulations allow for signage suitable for 440 Front Street, based on the use, size, scale and orientation of the buildings proposed on the premises. The proposed regulations in the attached site-specific amendment seek to ensure minimal impacts on surrounding properties while meeting the City's overall objectives as well as the applicant's needs. The site-specific amendment also provides

for appropriate identification and way-finding signs to guide visitors towards residences and other uses on site.

CONTACT

Ted Van Vliet
Manager, Sign By-law Unit, Toronto Building
Tel: 416-392-4235, E-mail: Ted.VanVliet@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Diane E. Damiano
Chief Building Official and Executive Director (Interim)
Toronto Building

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Draft of Proposed Area-Specific Amendment - 440 Front Street West

Attachment 2 - Renderings of Proposed Signs at 440 Front Street West