

Clause embodied in Report No. 11 of the Humber York Community Council, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on October 1, 2 and 3, 2002.

11

**71 The Queensway - Request for Minor Variances
from Chapter 297, Signs, of the (Former)
City of Toronto Municipal Code
(Parkdale-High Park, Ward 14)**

(City Council on October 1, 2 and 3, 2002, amended this Clause by striking out the recommendations of the Humber York Community Council and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

“It is recommended that Council adopt the report dated June 7, 2002, from the Director, Community Planning, South District, as embodied in the Clause.”)

The Humber York Community Council recommends that:

- (1) the report (June 7, 2002) from the Director, Community Planning, South District, not be adopted;**
- (2) the request for minor variances to permit, for third party advertising purposes, two fascia signs that would wrap around a water tower building at 71 The Queensway, be approved as a pilot project for a period of one (1) year; and**
- (3) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.**

The Humber York Community Council reports for the information of Council, having requested the Commissioner, Urban Development Services, to work out with the applicant and representatives of the St. Joseph Health Centre, the details of the community benefits as indicated by the applicant, and report back accordingly.

The Humber York Community Council submits the following report (June 7, 2002) from the Director, Community Planning, South District:

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations on a request by Sid Catalano on behalf of Shoreline Entertainment Corporation, for approval of minor variances from Chapter 297, Signs, of the (former) City of Toronto Municipal Code to permit, for third party advertising purposes, two fascia signs that would wrap around a water tower building at 71 The Queensway.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

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

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the request for minor variances be **refused** for the reasons outlined in this report.

Background:

The property is located between Parkside Drive and Sunnyside Avenue on the south side of The Queensway in a residential "R" zone. The property contains a two-storey brick building and a cylindrical, brick water tower structure. The proposal is to wrap the water tower building with two vinyl fascia signs. Each sign is 18.29 metres high and 9.15 metres wide with an area of 167.35 m². The aggregate area of the signs is 334.70 (see Attachment 2).

Comments:

The proposed fascia signs do not comply with Chapter 297 of the Municipal Code in the following ways:

1. fascia signs for third party advertising purposes are not permitted in a residential "R" zone; and
2. (former) Metro By-law 211-79 does not permit any third party signage within 45 metres from the northerly limit of F.G. Gardiner Expressway.

The proposal is to wrap the entire water tower building with two 18.29 metre high, vinyl fascia signs. The proposed signage would be very dramatic and create the visual effect of a giant juice can sitting between the F. G. Gardiner Expressway and The Queensway.

With respect to the first variance, third party signs are not permitted in a residential area. The intent of the by-law is to protect aesthetically sensitive areas such as parks, residences, hospitals and major city gateways from the intrusiveness of third party signage. In this case, the signs would be visible from homes located on the north side of The Queensway and from the St. Joseph Health Centre, which is located at a short distance to the east. The sign would also intrude upon the adjacent waterfront park, and High Park further to the west. It is my opinion that the scale of the proposed signage would be visually intrusive and inappropriate for the building and uses in the surrounding area and therefore not acceptable.

The second variance occurs because the proposed signs would be located within 45 metres of the northerly limit of the F. G. Gardiner Expressway. The (former) Metro By-law No. 211-79 prohibits commercial signage along all former Metro roads and within 45 metres of the Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway. The intent of this by-law is to protect aesthetically sensitive areas such as regional open space, and major city gateways as well as to ensure safe traffic movement. The proposed signs are excessive in size, height and would be

located in close proximity to the Gardiner Expressway and The Queensway. The sign would also be visible from the Lakeshore Boulevard West and City's waterfront parklands. The dramatic impact of these signs on motorists travelling on the Gardiner Expressway or Lake Shore Boulevard may be visually distracting and contribute to unsafe traffic conditions.

Signs are also restricted in order to protect panoramic views of the city's skyline. The proposed signs are not appropriate when considered in the context of the ongoing work on the new Waterfront Part II Plan. The City is studying opportunities to improve the quality of views from the city to the lake as a comprehensive planning exercise. Permitting signage of such magnitude in this area would not be consistent with the City's waterfront revitalization initiatives and will have a negative visual impact on the public realm.

Staff at the Heritage Preservation Services have reviewed the plans and have advised that they are not acceptable. They have recommended refusal in order to protect this unique heritage resource property. They believe that this unique structure will be obscured by the proposed signage and will cease to exist as a heritage landmark. This would be contrary to Preservation Services practice which requires that signage not obstruct the distinguishing architectural features of heritage structures.

Conclusion:

I am recommending refusal of this application, as I find the requested variances to be major and contravene the general intent and purpose of the sign provisions of the Municipal Code.

Contact:

Norm Girdhar, Planner, West Section
Tel: (416) 392-7209
Fax: (416) 392-1330
E-mail: ngirdhar@city.toronto.on.ca

(Attachments 1 and 2 referred to in the foregoing report were forwarded to all Members of the Humber York Community Council with the agenda for its meeting on September 17, 2002, and copies are on file in the office of the City Clerk, York Civic Centre.)

The following persons appeared before the Humber York Community Council in connection with the foregoing matter:

- Mr. Johnathan Vrozos, applicant; and
- Mr. Sid Catalano.

(City Council on October 1, 2 and 3, 2002, had before it, during consideration of the foregoing Clause, communications from the following, submitting comments with respect to the request for minor variances at 71 The Queensway:

- (a) (October 1, 2002) from Michael Craig and Gary McCluskie, Sunnyside Residents Association;*
- (b) (October 1, 2002) from John Leeson, submitted by Councillor David Miller, Parkdale-High Park;*
- (c) (October 1, 2002) from Neil Spiegel, submitted by Councillor David Miller, Parkdale-High Park; and*
- (d) (October 1, 2002) from Dawn Napier.)*