

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

Date: June 27, 2005

To: Chair and Members, The Etobicoke York Community Council

From: Edward Tipping, Director of Building and Deputy Chief Building Official

Subject: Request for approval of variances from Chapter 215, Signs, of the former City of Etobicoke Municipal Code for a first party ground (pylon) sign at 1025 The Queensway.

Etobicoke Lakeshore Ward 5

Purpose:

To review and make recommendations on a request by David Monaghan with Kramer Design Associates for Cineplex Galaxy for approval of variances from Chapter 215, Signs, of the former City of Etobicoke Municipal Code to permit a first party ground sign along the south side of the above noted location. Refer to attachments for details.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

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

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the request for variances be refused for the reasons outlined in this report.

Background

The property is located on the west side of Islington Ave, abuts The Gardner Expressway and contains a multi-screen theatre building (Cineplex Odeon). This property was severed from the abutting lands to the north developed with two separate restaurant building and a bank. The original larger parcel fronted onto The Queensway and the subject property still retains a municipal address on The Queensway (1025).

This property currently contains 2 pylon signs, one facing Islington Avenue and one facing the Queensway. These signs were installed as-of-right and with the benefit of a building permit. This property is subject to a previous variance application to which permitted the installation of 8

fascia signs and one illuminated pylon sign. The 8 fascia signs have been installed on the south face of the building facing the Gardner Expressway. The illuminated pylon sign was also proposed to be located along this frontage, but has not been installed.

Comments

Under the current application the applicant is now proposing to install a video display sign instead of the previously approved illuminated pylon sign. Although this sign is attached to the building, it is considered a ground sign as it has a post supporting the structure. This support is required as the sign will project 7.8 metres (25.5 feet) from the face of the building. The sign will be V-shaped with the 2 full colour video board displays facing south east and south west. The sign is to have an overall height of 15.24 metres (50 feet), being approximately the same height as the existing building. The two display areas will be approximately 37 square metres (400 square feet) on each face. The sign will have two separate components making up its face. The majority of the sign will consist of the video display on which it is intended to advertise the movie selection available at the theatre. While along the bottom of the sign there will be a display of the time the movies are showing at the theatres.

The sign does not comply with Chapter 215, Signs, of the former City of Etobicoke Municipal Code in the following way:

Sign By-law Section & Requirements	Applicant’s Proposal	Required Variance
1. - 215-12(A) – Maximum height of ground (pylon) signs is permitted to be 11 m (36 ft.)	The applicant proposes a height of 15.24 m (50 ft.)	The sign exceeds the maximum height restrictions by approximately 4.24 m (14 ft.) .
2. - 215-14 –No sign illumination shall be animated or flashing except for intermittent lighting used for temperature displays and electronic message centres.	The applicant proposes a ground sign to display movie content and movie times.	This type of display is not permitted in the sign by-law
3. - 215-22(B)(2) - Maximum number of ground signs - Industrial zoned sites which abuts two or more streets are restricted to a maximum of (2) two ground signs.	The applicant proposes an additional ground sign adjacent to the rear lot line for a total of (3) three signs for the entire site.	The overall number of ground signs permitted by the by-law will be increased by (1) one .

The variances with respect to height and the overall number of ground signs (variances #1 and 3) have been approved under the previous application. The height of the sign under the present

application is approximately 6.7 metres (22 feet) shorter than was previously approved.

This sign is intended to display clips from movies showing at the cinema as well as the times the shows are airing. The faces of this sign will consist of 2 full colour video boards utilizing high definition television (HDTV) technology. This requires variance #2 listed above to be addressed.

Staff has concerns with it with respect to the video display element of the sign for a number of reasons.

The advertising on these signs is targeting vehicular traffic travelling on The Gardner Expressway. The applicant has prepared plans demonstrating the viewing angles from the on-ramp from Islington Ave to The Gardner Expressway. This plan demonstrates that not until a vehicle has moved approximately three-quarters of the way through the ramp will the video screen be visible. This plan does confirm that the effective viewing area for the screens will be for persons travelling in the vehicles in both directions on The Gardner Expressway. There may be some transportation hazards associated with the location of this sign in close proximity to the Gardner Expressway.

The sign Code does not recognize this type of sign, as when the Code was approved this technology did not exist. The existing sign Code permits signs to contain intermittent lighting. A typical sign that would contain intermittent lighting would be the signs displaying the current time and temperature. The type of messaging on these signs is simple and would not require the driver of a vehicle to maintain eye contact with the sign for a long period of time. Video display signs are of a different nature and the standards found in the Code may not be appropriate to apply to video display signs.

The approval of a variance with respect to the video display would be the first such approval from the Municipal Code for the former City of Etobicoke and may set a precedent for future signs of a similar nature. Allowing signs of this nature without appropriate standards to compare the proposal to may not result in an appropriate development. Staff therefore would not support this variance.

Should it be determined by Community Council that the video display sign be allowed, staff recommend that a site specific amendment to the sign Code be the more appropriate approval method. This would allow for public consultation and a more detailed review of the proposal by all relevant divisions such as Buildings, Planning as well as Transportation. It may also lead to the establishment of appropriate standards for this sign on the subject site.

Conclusion

Staff recommends that this application be refused for the reasons stated in the report.

Contact:

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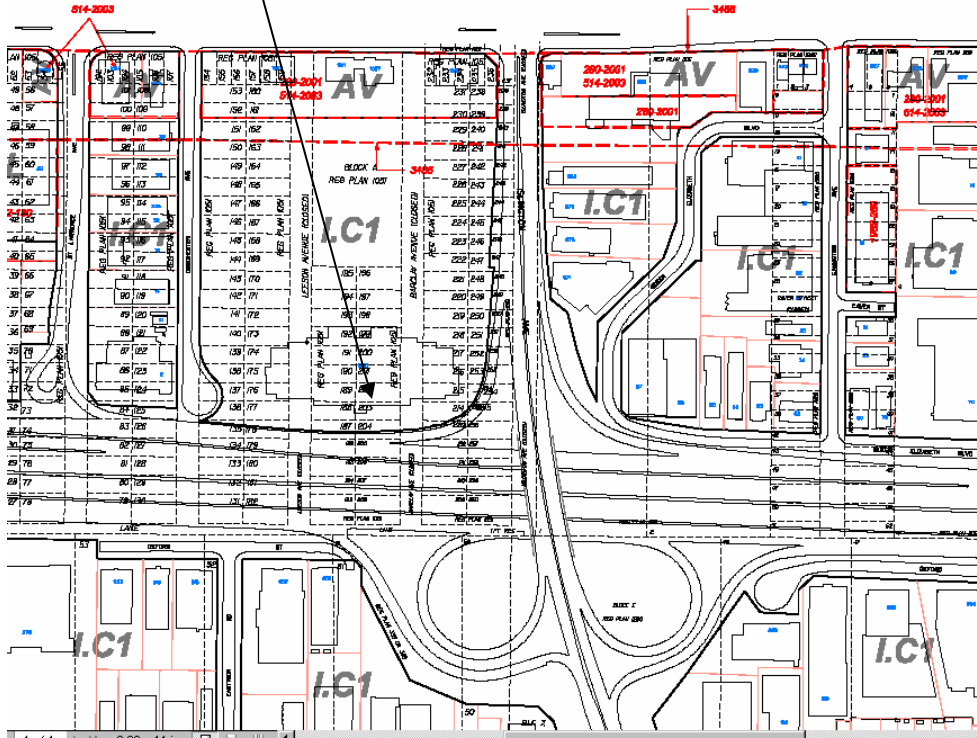
List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Zoning Map

Attachment 2: Site Plan and Elevations

1025 The Queensway

Cineplex Odeon Theatre



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