

From: [robert bader](#)
To: [Planning and Housing](#)
Subject: Item PH23.16 - One York Street - May 20, 2021
Date: May 17, 2021 12:49:33 PM
Attachments: [One York.Rationale.pdf](#)

Good morning,

I am the Applicant for the above-noted matter. I wish to speak to the Committee on the matter. Please register me at your earliest convenience.

I also note that my application materials were not provided with the Staff Report. This places my application in quite a disadvantage with the decision-makers, as the rationale that I have composed in support of the application cannot be shared with the decision-makers. As such, please see the attached, which I would like submitted in support of the application.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Regards,
Robert Bader
(437) 234-5368



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January 19, 2021

File #: 20-207

Delivered by email: signbylawunit@toronto.ca
Ted.VanVliet.@toronto.ca

Sign By-Law Unit
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ATTENTION: TED VAN VLIET, MANAGER, SIGN BY-LAW UNIT, TORONTO BUILDING
RE: SIGN BY-LAW AMENDMENT APPLICATION – ONE YORK STREET

Dear Mr. Van Vliet,

On behalf of One York Street Inc. (a partnership between Menkes Developments, Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan and Sun Life) we are pleased to submit an application for a site-specific amendment to the City’s Sign By-law. We anticipate consideration of this application by the decision-makers sometime in Spring 2021.

Menkes Developments Ltd. is an award-winning, fully integrated, private real estate company involved in the construction, ownership and management of office, industrial, retail and residential properties. Founded in 1954, the Company is one of the largest private developers in Canada, with a primary focus in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

For over 65 years Menkes has been a development force in Toronto, deeply involved in place-making and community-building across multiple real estate sectors in various districts. Most notably, Menkes was at the forefront in establishing North York City Centre as an urban core – a place to live, work and play – by producing such development projects as Empress Walk, Gibson Square and Proctor & Gamble’s head office. More recently, Menkes has been a catalyst in creating South Core, effectively an extension of the Financial District southwards to Lake Ontario. In South Core, Menkes has produced such development projects as Telus House, Harbour Plaza, Sugar Wharf (ongoing), Waterfront Innovation Centre (ongoing) and the property that is the subject of this application, Sun Life Financial Tower at One York Street (the “Property”).

FIGURE 1: ENTRANCE TO ONE YORK STREET



The global headquarters of Sun Life Financial Group operates out of the Property. The 35-storey, 800,000 square foot office tower is designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification, and provides 200,000 square feet of retail with connections to Toronto's Union Station and PATH network. The office component is connected by a five-storey podium to two residential condominium towers, each measuring 63 and 67 storeys.

SIGNAGE HISTORY

The office tower was completed and occupancy commenced in and around 2016. Up to that time an application for minor variances to the Sign By-law was made to provide for the identification of the retail and commercial tenants. A comprehensive signage proposal was considered by City staff, including staff in City Planning, Transportation Services, Urban Design, Heritage Preservation Services and Economic Development. The application was also circulated to the local Councillor and the local Ratepayers Group.

FIGURE 2: RENDERING OF ORIGINAL AND "AS-BUILT" SIGNAGE ON THE NORTH ELEVATION OF PODIUM

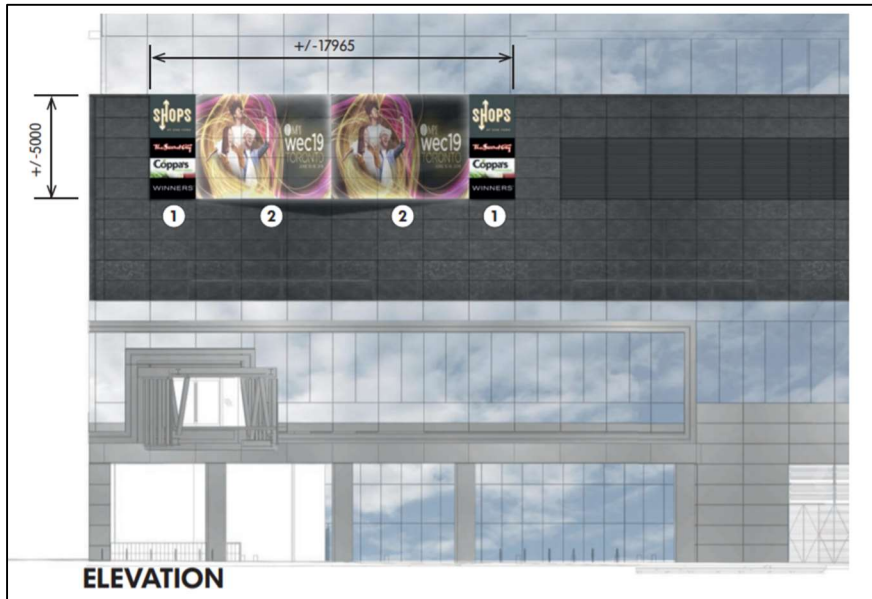


Ultimately, through an appeal of the decision of the Chief Building Official (see Item SB31.2; September 29, 2014), a Signage Master Plan containing 14 signs, was approved which included upper-storey corporate logos on the office tower portion, commercial tenant signage on an architecturally-detailed entrance feature along Harbour Street and book-ended signage along the Gardiner-facing north elevation of the podium (see Figure #2). The expected anchor tenant, Target, did not materialize and the large retail space had to be reconfigured to accommodate a different mixture of commercial lessees. This application, in part, is a response to these events. It is important to also consider, due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the precarious state of retail. The Property contains nearly 20,000m² of retail and this application seeks viable options to support that vital component of a healthy neighbourhood.

CURRENT PROPOSAL

This current proposal seeks to replace the existing static signage installed at the easterly portion of the Gardiner-facing north elevation of the podium with a combination of first party static signage (for commercial tenant identification purposes) and third party electronic static signage (for both commercial tenant, and other, advertising purposes). The two identical static components frame the v-shaped electronic static sign faces on the east and the west and measure 5.00 metres vertically by 2.25 metres horizontally. The two electronic static v-shaped sign faces each measure 5.00 metres vertically by 6.74 metres horizontally. Overall, the proposed fixture measures approximately 5.00 metres vertically by 17.97 metres horizontally and the v-shaped component projects no more than 1.70 metres from the north elevation. The overall height from grade of the signage components is approximately 23.00 metres.

FIGURE 3: PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION OF PODIUM - RENDERING OF PROPOSED SIGNAGE

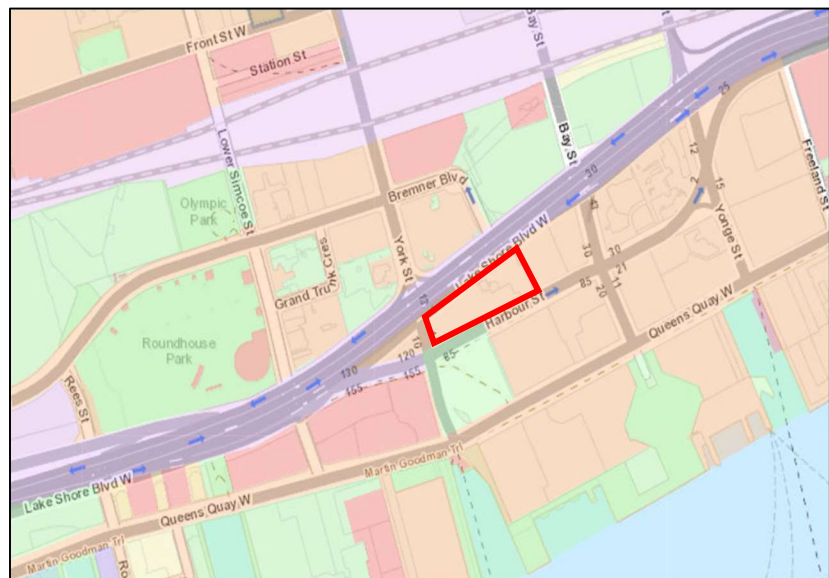


As envisioned, the proposal is not a significant departure from what was previously approved and currently installed along this portion of the podium façade. The scale and size of the various components fit well with each other and against the podium façade to provide a clean and composed panorama which is sympathetic to the architectural elements of the building and not overwhelm the environment. The signage proposal serves a dual purpose of (a) responding

to the aforementioned need of identifying the further demised commercial tenant space, and (b) providing those important commercial tenants with opportunities to draw patronage necessary to successfully operate.

The Property is located in a CR-Commercial Residential Sign District (See Figure 4). Along with the C-Commercial Sign District, the CR-Commercial Residential Sign District is the most permissive of all the Sign Districts, consistent with the land use provisions provided for in the in-force Zoning By-law and underlying Official Plan designation. Third party electronic wall signs are not permitted in a CR-Commercial Residential Sign District, hence the purpose of this application. This sign type is however, permitted in C-Commercial, E-Employment and U-Utility Sign Districts.

FIGURE 4: SIGN DISTRICT MAP - EXCERPT



RECENT EVENTS

In November 2019, One York Street welcomed the legendary Comedy Institution, *The Second City*, into a 28,700 square foot space on the third floor of the retail podium. The iconic comedy company came to the City of Toronto in 1973 to which it has developed some of the finest names of proud Canadians in the industry. The event venue at One York Street consists of multiple comedy theatres for live performance as well as classroom space for the ever growing Second City Training Centre. The addition of *The Second City* among the other exceptional retail tenants in the mixed-use complex further solidifies One York Street’s position as the ultimate live, work, play environment.

This warm welcome arrived only months before the COVID-19 Pandemic Province-wide shutdowns completely changed the ability to utilize these large multi-use spaces designed for groups, meetings, celebrations and events of all sizes.

The Second City’s central location in the South Core of Downtown Toronto and connectivity to The PATH network make it an easily accessible, attractive event venue and major tourist destination. *The Second City* at One York St now builds part of the vibrant entertainment hub among other landmark entertainment venues such as Scotiabank Arena, the Rogers Centre, Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada and the CN Tower. These major destinations create an environment for Tourists and Torontonians alike to connect and experience the endless possibilities the City of Toronto has to offer.

The proposed electronic displays will play a vital role in providing this legendary institution with the necessary ability to provide visibility, accessibility, programming and way-finding opportunities for the audience of Torontonians and Tourists, particularly in a post COVID-19 environment.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Property is located at the northeast corner of York Street and Harbour Street and occupies the westerly portion of the block bounded by York Street to the west, Lake Shore Boulevard West/Gardiner Expressway to the north, the neighbouring property at 30 Bay Street to the east and Harbour Street to the south. It is one hectare in size with frontages of 169.8 metres along Harbour Street, 48.8 metres along York Street and 164 metres along Lake Shore Boulevard West. It is located in the Union Station District Plan and in the expansion area for the Waterfront Business Improvement Area.

The surrounding land uses are provided in the following table:

FIGURE 5: TABLE – SURROUNDING LAND USES			
NORTH	SOUTH	EAST	WEST
Lakeshore Boulevard West/Gardiner Expressway; further north, Maple Leaf Square at 15 York Street, consisting of a 10-storey mixed use podium connecting a 50 and a 54-storey residential tower.	Harbour Street, and beyond, the Gardiner Expressway off-ramps leading to York Street and Bay Street; and, Waterpark Place office complex, consisting of an 18, a 24 and a 30-storey office tower.	Toronto Harbour Commission building at 60 Harbour Street, a 6-storey heritage designated building with the remainder of the site being used for commercial parking. These lands have a site specific by-law that permits an approx. 29-storey office building.	A triangular lot at 120 Harbour Street, formerly utilized as a surface parking lot and now improved with a 68-storey residential condominium.

It should be noted that the Property lies within close proximity to the recently re-branded Scotiabank Arena. The iconic sporting venue is located on the north side of the Gardiner Expressway, northeast of the Property. The re-branding exercise realized what could effectively be described as a digitally illuminated cowl with light movement and colour that responds to particular events being hosted there (see Figure # 6).

FIGURE 6: NEARBY SCOTIABANK ARENA WITH ANIMATED/ILLUMINATED SIGNAGE BAND



HERITAGE

The property is located within the Union Station Heritage Conservation District (HCD), designated under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by By-law No. 634-2006, enacted by City Council on July 27, 2006. The Union Station HCD Plan outlines policies for both additions and alterations to heritage buildings and new construction within the district to ensure that they enhance the character of the district, and are compatible with the overall planning goals of the district.

The former Workman's Compensation Building occupied the Property until 2011, when it was demolished. At that time, the Property was owned by the provincial government. The Property was subsequently sold to ultimately provide for the development and construction of the current building. The current building is not a contributing building to the Union Station HCD. Referring to the signage history, in discussing the signage needs for the Property at that time, Heritage Preservation Services had no objections to the signage then contemplated. It is therefore understood that the current signage proposal is generally in keeping with the past approvals and that this proposal respects and enhances the existing character of the Property and district as a whole and is compatible with the overall planning goals of the district.

ILLUMINATION AND ELECTRONIC STATIC COPY

There have been significant advances made in digital signage technology since the establishment of a new signage regime for the City, in 2009. The Sign By-law has responded, most recently by incorporating legislative changes that were considered through a comprehensive illuminated and electronic sign review which included:

- A Planning and Design Review of the impact of electronic and illuminated signs on surrounding land uses and methods used in other municipalities to address that;
- A Traffic Safety Study which examined the potential safety implications of electronic signs;
- Public and Stakeholder Consultations; and

- A Public Opinion Poll on electronic and illuminated signs.

The legislative changes to the Sign By-law included, in part:

- Expanding the areas where electronic signs can be located;
- Requiring an amendment to the Sign By-law where such signs are not otherwise permitted (case in point);
- Reducing the permitted brightness of these sign types by 40%; and
- Recognizing electronic signs as a separate sign type (not just a method in which sign copy is displayed).

The substance of the review revealed that people are concerned with such signs located where they live, particularly such a sign type's "impact on residential dwelling units in upper storeys of mixed-use buildings." The review also reported that such signs are not permitted in CR-Commercial Residential Sign Districts because they "tend to be in areas of the city that are more pedestrian-oriented and where smaller scale signs are more appropriate due to the close proximity of residential land uses, and reduced impact on the pedestrian environment."

To be sure, this signage proposal is not immediately located within a pedestrian environment and the aforementioned advances in digital signage technology allow for display screens to be precisely scoped towards an intended viewer with the ability to shield any light emissions by the sign from adjacent and sensitive residential uses. To the east, the nearest building containing residential uses within a line-of-sight of the proposed sign is located at 18 Yonge Street, approximately 285 metres away from the location of the proposed sign. That sightline is significantly obstructed by the development of the office tower commonly known as "CIBC Square" at 45 Bay Street. From the west, the twinned condominium towers commonly known as "Ice Condos I & II", at 12-14 York Street, are at an approximate 175 metres distance from the location of the proposed sign. Notwithstanding these generous separations, special provisions can be incorporated into the site-specific By-law to mitigate light trespass and to protect such nearby sensitive uses.¹

In addition, the proposed sign will comply in all respects with the illumination provisions contained at §694-18 including: time-of-day operation (only between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.); maximum daytime brightness; and, maximum brightness at dusk and dawn.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

In support of the Application, to amend the Sign By-law on site-specific basis, for the property municipally known as 1 York Street, we provide the following:

- Completed Application Form;
- Survey Plan;
- Plans, including Site Plan, Roof Plan, Elevation, details;
- Renderings;
- Sign Data Sheet;
- This rationale, supporting the proposal;
- Draft amending By-law;

¹ As an example, please refer to Item PG4.7 (2015), specifically as it relates to the third party electronic sign approval at 9 Hanna Avenue.

- Survey Sketch, as required by policy;
- Statement prepared by a practicing OLS, as required by policy.

We trust that this is in accordance with your expectations and we look forward to your favourable consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

Regards,



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