

Staff Report



To	City Council
Service Area	Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise Services
Date	Tuesday, September 19, 2023
Subject	Sign By-law Variances for 176 Morris Street

Recommendation

1. That the proposed electronic message board, located 22.4 metres from a residentially zoned property, be approved, and;
 2. That the proposed signage located in a Park (P.5-5) Zone under the 1995 Zoning By-law, be approved.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

This report is to advise of two Sign By-law variance requests to permit an electronic message board together with an illuminated sign in an existing signage box at the Guelph Little Theatre, 176 Morris Street.

Key Findings

This property is located in the Specialized Commercial Recreation (P.5-5) Zone under the 1995 Zoning By-law and Neighbourhood Institutional (NI) Zone under Council approved 2023 Zoning By-law which permits the theatre use.

Sign Art Centre of Guelph Inc. Inc. on behalf of the Guelph Little Theatre, has submitted a Sign By-law variance application for 176 Morris Street to permit an illuminated sign together with an electronic message board measuring 5.2 metres in length, 0.7 metres in height and 0.13m in width. It is to be located in an existing sign box on the one-storey roof above the building entrance, that was permitted by way of an approved sign variance application in 1997. Please refer to Attachment-2 Sign Drawings.

The proposed sign does not meet the requirements of the Sign By-law, as follows:

- Table 24.1 states Electronic Message Centres shall be located a minimum of distance of 30m away from any residentially zoned property; and,
- There are no sign regulations in Park Zones.

The request for variances of the sign is recommended for approval since the proposed one-sided sign is located in an existing sign box which is perpendicular to the closest residential properties, therefore limiting the impact of the electronic message board.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The proposed Sign by-law variance report aligns with the direction of our Strategic Plan Priority “Powering our Future - to help businesses succeed and add value to the community” and Future Guelph Strategic Plan 2024–2027 Priority “People and Economy – Grow Guelph’s economy”.

Financial Implications

None.

Report

This report is being presented at Council for decision as Section 7.2, Authority, Variances, and Appeals, of Sign By-law (2021) - 20621 states:

“Pursuant to section 23.2 of the Municipal Act, Council hereby delegates to the Sign Administrator the power to grant Sign Variances from any of the provisions of this By-law. The Sign Administrator’s Authority is limited in scope and shall not apply to Sign Variances related to: c) A reduction in distance required from a residential zone for an illuminated Sign.”

The proposed sign requires Council approval due to the 22.4m distance to a residential property from the proposed electronic message board sign, whereas the minimum distance required is 30 metres.

Table 1 – Requested Variances from Sign By-law (2021)-20621

By-law Section	By-law Requirement	Requests
Table 24.1 Electronic Message Centres	Locations Restricted: Unless otherwise permitted by this By-law, Electronic Message Centres shall be located a minimum distance of 30m away from any residentially zoned property and any intersection.	To permit an illuminated sign together with an electronic message board with a distance 22.4 metres to a residential zoned property.
None	No sign regulations within Park Zones under the Sign By-law.	To permit a sign within a Park Zone

Staff are satisfied that there will be little impact from the proposed electronic message board and illuminated sign. It is perpendicular to the closest residential properties and will meet all other regulations for electronic message boards and illuminated signs. The sign is fully programmable and will be programmed so that the lighting will be under 200 Nits between sunset and sunrise (a maximum lighting/Nit requirement when signs with illumination are near residential properties), no prohibited content and meet the minimum 20 second transition between messages with instantaneous transitions and no effects. Though the existing roof location is prohibited under the Sign By-law, the sign will be located in an existing box that was approved by a Sign Variance in 1997. The portion of the building facing York Road where the sign is located has a flat roof that cannot accommodate a fascia sign.

Financial Implications

None.

Consultations

Internal consultation with Planning Services - Urban Design. External communication with the applicant. A public notice has been placed in the local newspaper to inform the public. Notice was also mailed to residents within 30 metres of the subject property.

Attachments

Attachment-1 Location Map with Aerial Photo

Attachment-2 Sign Variance Drawings

Departmental Approval

Patrick Sheehy, Program Manager – Zoning

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This report was approved by:

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