

9. Re: Draft Sign Bylaw  
(Item 9, Report 1, January 10, 1972)

The following is the report dated January 13, 1972, from the Planning Director supplying the additional information requested by Council on January 10, 1972. The subject was at that time tabled for one week pending the receipt of this report.

A motion is on the floor which in essence deletes reference to political signs by deleting Item #9 of Schedule 1 and Sub-Clause 8 (f) in Clause 5.1.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Solicitor be asked to prepare the necessary bylaw as outlined in the Manager's Report Item No. 9, Report No. 1, subject to the deletion of references to political signs; and  
THAT the bylaw be brought forward.

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Planning Department,  
January 13, 1972.  
Our file # 02.230, No. 4173

RE: DRAFT SIGN BYLAW: FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

A. BACKGROUND

The original draft Sign Bylaw, which was prepared in May, 1971, has been reviewed by this department following study by the Advisory Planning Commission and the receipt of comments from the Illuminated Sign Manufacturers Association of B. C., Community Planning Association of Canada and the Citizen's Council on Civic Development. The resulting revised draft Sign Bylaw (January, 1971) was submitted to the Council for consideration on January 10, 1971, together with an accompanying report, a summary of the main points raised and proposed changes.

The source of the comments which were received was requested. These have been added to the attached summary for the information of Council. A number of questions were also raised with respect to certain of the proposed regulations. These included the provisions governing inspection, temporary signs and billboards.

B. INSPECTION

Responsibility for the administration and enforcement of the regulations of the proposed Sign Bylaw has been placed with the Chief Building Inspector. Each person wishing to erect, place, rebuild, reconstruct or move any sign would apply for a sign permit much in the same manner as a building permit is obtained.

The inspection of the approved sign would be made by qualified members of the Building Department staff to ensure that the necessary work has been done in compliance with the applicable regulations of the Sign Bylaw and with the structural and electrical standards of the Building Bylaw and Electrical Code. Such inspections should present no problems, according to the Building Department, assuming that full working drawings are provided (which is specified in the proposed Sign Bylaw). It should also be emphasized that this type of work in connection with signs is already a part of the Building Department function.

C. TEMPORARY SIGNS

In the proposed Sign Bylaw, temporary signs are permitted in all districts. In addition, most of these signs may be erected, subject to the conditions specified, without a permit. For these reasons, the proposed regulations do not permit such signs to be illuminated or animated.

The illumination or animation of temporary signs is considered unnecessary and could, if allowed, infringe upon the privacy of individuals within areas of the Municipality where signs are not a generally accepted, nor desirable part of the environment (i.e. residential districts). Permitting the illumination of temporary signs, which are relatively unrestricted as to location, could also create hazardous conditions in close proximity to streets, traffic signals, intersections or railroad crossings.

D. BILLBOARDS

With regard to billboards, the proposed Sign Bylaw regulations would prohibit the future erection of the large non-accessory sign structures (a sign advertising a product unrelated to the land use of the property on which it is located) which are generally associated with this term. Such a regulation is aimed primarily at the standard size billboard that measures 12 by 25 feet (300 square feet).

Billboard signs, like flashing or rotating signs, are considered unnecessary, (in view of the many other types of signs which are available) to effectively convey a visual advertising message. They attract attention to a degree where they represent an intrusion into surrounding areas as well as being a hazard on heavily travelled thoroughfares. Large structures of this type tend to obliterate the view and detract from other advertising. They inhibit the development of sites on which they are located and are, in addition, often characterized by unsightly supporting structures and poor site maintenance.

Burnaby is fortunate in that existing billboards are limited in number and it is our opinion that these billboards will gradually disappear as they are replaced by development or redevelopment of the sites on which they are located. We concur with the views of many neighbouring municipalities in the Lower Mainland which do not allow billboards. These include North Vancouver City, North Vancouver District, Richmond and West Vancouver.

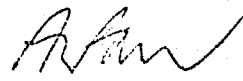
In conclusion, while the proposed bylaw would prohibit the excessively large non-accessory advertising signs which are generally referred to as billboards, non-accessory freestanding signs are permitted in the C3, C4 and C7 Districts. The maximum sign areas in these zones are related to the area of the lot, the maximum size permitted being a sign of 200 square feet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (1) The proposed regulations with respect to the above mentioned items be retained.
- (2) The Council endorse the revised draft Sign Bylaw.
- (3) The Council adopt the recommendations of the Manager's report of January 10, 1971, namely, that the Solicitor be asked to prepare the necessary bylaw, as proposed, and that the bylaw be brought forward.

Respectfully submitted,



A. L. Parr,  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING.

RBC:ew

att. 1

c. c. Chief Building Inspector  
Municipal Clerk  
Municipal Engineer  
Municipal Solicitor  
Senior Planner

I. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED SIGN BYLAW REGULATIONS.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
1. Definitions (Section 2)	a) The word "support" is included as part of the definition of a sign. Supporting structures should be exempted from any allowable area of the advertising sign itself. (I.S.M.A.)	a) The definition of "Sign Area" would remove this concern, since it specifies what is to be included in calculating the area of a sign.
	b) The term "billboard" should be defined. (I.S.M.A.)	b) Since the definition of "Freestanding Sign" specifically excludes billboards, the addition of a definition would be desirable in order to clarify what is meant by this term.
	c) The definition of "Sign Area" should be clarified where fascia signs are concerned. In many cases, tasteful fascia signs are used as a complete facing from the lintel line to the roof line and thus, without major structural change, cover up many unsightly transom windows, old fashioned ledges, etc. The desired result can be obtained by using various percentage formulae, depending on zone, as suggested in the proposed bylaw, but by simply stating that the lettering or message area be limited to a given percentage rather than by using the wording "sign area". (I.S.M.A.)	c) The draft bylaw definition of "Sign Area" would permit the structural changes referred to without including the wall facing within the area of a fascia sign. The definition states that the area of such a sign would be included within the shortest line surrounding the whole group of letters, figures or symbols.
	d) The proposed bylaw should make a clear distinction between a genuine fascia sign and a wall sign. (I.S.M.A.)	d) Under the proposed definition wall signs are included with fascia signs. The differentiating between these signs is considered unnecessary since the permitted areas of both are related to the wall of the building on which they are located.
	e) The definitions of "animated sign" and "flashing sign" should be re-examined in order to provide a clearer distinction between the two and also to allow for changing message and alternating digital time and temperature signs which, under the present definitions would not be permitted. (I.S.M.A.)	e) We would agree with these comments and propose that the applicable definitions be revised in the light of them.

\*Source of Comments:

- (1) I.S.M.A. - (Illuminated Sign Manufacturer's Association of B.C., and Neon Products of Canada Limited).
- (2) C.P.A.C. - (Community Planning Association of Canada).
- (3) C.C.C.D. - (Citizen's Council on Civic Development).

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
2. General Requirements (Section 5.1)	a) The requirement that the weight and makers name be permanently attached to the interior of a sign seems a most unusual place for such identification. (I.S.M.A.)	a) This comment is due to a misprint in the bylaw which should read the "exterior" of a sign.
	b) The prohibition of billboards would mean that a billboard company would be forced to preserve all the present old fashioned 24 sheet posters. The replacing of these by tastefully landscaped modern trios could not be accomplished under the proposed regulations. (I.S.M.A.)	b) The retention of the proposed regulations that would prohibit further billboards is strongly recommended. Existing billboards would gradually disappear as they are replaced by development or redevelopment of the sites on which they are located. We concur with the views of many neighbouring municipalities in the Lower Mainland which do not allow billboards.
	c) Our hope has been to see all outdoor accessory signs of the massive billboard size eliminated. A good alternative would be to have these in poster size only (say 3 by 6 or 4 by 8 feet) displayed on attractively designed street level panels at bus stops and specially landscaped bench areas, which the advertisers would provide. (C.P.A.C.)	c) We are in agreement with this comment. The display panels referred to would be permitted under the regulations governing freestanding signs.
	d) While most people would agree that certain types of flashing signs should be limited, care should be taken in the wording of anti-flashing and anti-revolving sign regulations. (I.S.M.A.)	d) See remarks under item 1 (e) above.
	e) We approve of the outlawing of flashing and (more particularly) rotating signs as proposed in the draft bylaw. (C.P.A.C.)	e) We agree with this comment but propose to clarify the applicable definitions to ensure that such items as time and temperature messages are not prohibited.
	f) Provision should be included in the proposed bylaw for the removal of non-conforming signs within a specified period of time (say, 3 years). (C.P.A.C.)	f) We agree with this comment but this matter has been discussed with the Municipal Solicitor who is of the opinion that the Municipal Act does not provide for this type of regulation.
	g) Consideration should be given to the establishment of an advisory environmental design panel. (C.C.C.D.)	g) This comment has wider ramifications that would presumably include buildings as well as signs. The Council has received a report on the design panel, but has not acted on it. This is a subject which could be dealt with in a separate study.

ITEM	COMMENTS	REMARKS
3. General Siting and Locational Standards (Section 5.3)	a) It is questionable whether it is good policy to limit the height of projecting signs to either the parapet or roof level, as there are many situations such as Robson Street in Vancouver with a miscellany of very narrow, one-storey shops where a series of neatly installed vertical blades say, 8 or 9 feet tall and 18 inches wide would have been preferable to the present maze of horizontal installations, each blocking the other. (I.S.M.A.)	a) The proposed regulations would not prevent the type of sign suggested, except on very low buildings. In any case, fascia signs would be preferable under these circumstances. Adequate suspension can be designed without the sign projecting above the roof. It is considered desirable to preserve the roof lines of buildings in order to not interfere with their architectural appearance
4. Sign Specifications (Section 5.4)	a) Rather than establishing a set maximum area for projecting signs (70 square feet), it would be preferable to relate the allowable projection of double faced signs to the width of each store front. (I.S.M.A.)	a) We would not agree with a proposed regulation that would vary the amount of projection with the store frontage. Projecting signs are among the most unsightly in many commercial areas.
	b) We agree with the removal of visible support structures for projecting signs, plus their elimination from all except C3, C4 and C7 Districts. It is felt, however, that 70 sq. ft. is too large for such signs. At this size they will continue to clutter and obstruct the street vistas. (C.P.A.C.)	b) See remarks under item 4 a) above.
	c) The maximum height of roof signs (4 feet) should be increased. Such signs should be permitted under a formula which relates their allowable size to the height of the building in question which compels that they appear as a part of the building with no unsightly structure visible from the street. (I.S.M.A.)	c) The proposed regulations will ensure a good development standard for this type of sign which has contributed to the clutter and unsightliness of many commercial areas.
	d) We approve of the limitation of roof signs to a height of 4 feet above the roof line and to one-half its length on the display side. (C.P.A.C.)	d) We would agree with this comment and recommend the retention of the proposed regulations for roof signs.
5. Schedules	a) The area allowance for canopy signs should be based on the perimeter of the canopy, not on the street frontage as the neatest canopy is that which has a continuous apron all the way around the canopy, regardless of whether the canopy covers that whole front of the building or only a small portion of it. (I.S.M.A.)	a) The retention of the proposed regulations is considered desirable in that they provide a direct relationship between sign area and the street frontage of the building to which the sign is attached. The proposed regulations will not prevent the type of sign suggested.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
5. Schedules (cont.)	b) We approve of the size control of canopy signs in relation to lot frontage. (C.P.A.C.)	b) See remarks under item 5(a) above.
	c) We approve of the size control of fascia signs in relation to lot frontage or display wall. (C.P.A.C.)	c) We agree with this comment.
	d) The permitted sign area for freestanding signs in P Districts (Schedule No. 111) is too small. Many large recreational and institutional uses and buildings require larger signs to advertise sporting events and other activities. Also the scale of many developments of this type is quite large (e.g. Swangard Stadium, Century Gardens, B.C.I.T., S.F.U., Burnaby General Hospital etc.). (Burnaby Parks Department)	d) We do not agree that public buildings and institutions of this type require large signs. However, because most of them are located on large sites, fairly sizeable fascia and canopy signs would be permitted since their areas are directly related to the frontage of the property.
	e) While the areas permitted for freestanding signs seem reasonable, the 30 foot height limit on lots of more than one acre (Schedule V) would be questioned, as there are many cases where the magnitude of a shopping centre or a big Safeway is such that a 30 foot height limit would create a rather squatty appearance and make the sign disproportionately low to the magnitude of the premises involved. Standard Safeway signs, for instance, are usually 40 feet in height. (I.S.M.A.)	e) The Comprehensive Sign Plan regulations (Section 6.4) would allow exceptions to the established standards and permit signs to be properly integrated and related to the scale of a shopping centre or other commercial development. It is therefore quite possible that a 40 foot sign would be permitted as part of such a plan, particularly if a large project were involved.
	f) We do not feel that the draft by-law will reduce the prevalent freestanding sign, which is oversized, mutually obstructing and a traffic hazard. Where these signs are allowed without relation to the size of a lot, they largely eclipse smaller structures. With this pattern in an area, one gets the impression of a street that consists of nothing but signs. This is particularly so where heights of 20 to 30 feet and areas of 100 to 200 square feet are allowable. (C.P.A.C.)	f) It is our view that the sign areas proposed in the Bylaw are reasonable and should be retained.