

ITEM SUPPLEMENTARY 31
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 50
COUNCIL MEETING 1983 07 25

RE: BURNABY SIGN BYLAW REVIEW

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. *THAT the recommendations of the Director Planning and Building Inspection be adopted.*

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SUPPLEMENTARY
1983 JULY 25

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION
SUBJECT: BURNABY SIGN BYLAW REVIEW
Our File: 02.230

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- SECTION 3.4 1. THAT Council confirm its decision of 1983 May 30 allowing ICMS facia signs in C3, C4 and P2 Districts to a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum area of 150 sq. ft. (adjusted for metric).
2. THAT staff meet with Sign Industry representatives to endeavor to determine why the industry is pressing for excessive standards for ICMS signs that are incompatible with current Burnaby community standards.
- SECTION 3.5 3. THAT Council confirm its decision to retain the present definition of Sign Area.
- SECTION 3.18 4. THAT Council confirm its decision to retain the present provisions of the Sign Bylaw regulating the maximum number of freestanding signs per street frontage.

R E P O R T

INTRODUCTION:

At the Council meeting of 1983 May 30, the final seven items of the review of the Burnaby Sign Bylaw were reported on by staff and the Sign Bylaw Review Committee and Council decisions reacted on these items.

At the following Council meeting on 1983 June 06, the Sign Industry requested that Council reconsider several of its decisions, particularly those related to Illuminated Changing Message System (ICMS) Signs and this request was referred to the Review Committee.

Council will be dealing with these items at its meeting of 1983 July 25, and as the proposals included in the request for reconsideration have such serious negative ramifications with respect to the quality of the environment, it is deemed appropriate to prepare the attached Appendix I for the information of the Council on the following three Sections:

SECTION 3.4 Definition of "Sign Animated" relative to Illuminated Changing Message System Signs (ICMS).

SECTION 3.5 Definition of "Sign Area" to increase the size of freestanding signs.

SECTION 3.18 Increase in number of freestanding signs per street frontage.

STAFF COMMENT AND CONCLUSION:

The staff comment and conclusion on each of these items (extracted from Appendix I) is as follows:

SECTION 3.4 (ICMS Signs)

The current proposals of the Sign Industry would virtually remove all control of the size of ICMS signs; permit them in all districts in the Municipality; place existing signs at a disadvantage; emphasize the undesirable strip commercial appearance of the signs; and allow them to be established in a form which is particularly unsuitable to pedestrian-oriented, high-density commercial areas.

The new proposals are clearly unacceptable and the conclusion is that Council should confirm its decisions of 1983 May 30, allowing ICMS fascia signs in C3, C4 and P2 Districts to a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum area of 150 square feet (slightly adjusted when the Bylaw is made metric).

As recommended by the Sign Review Committee, staff will meet with the Sign Industry to endeavour to find out through discussion why it is pressing for excessive standards for ICMS signs, that are incompatible with current community standards.

SECTION 3.5 (Size of Freestanding Signs)

There can be no support for a Sign Industry proposition that would result in increasing the size of freestanding signs leading to a need for owners of existing signs to replace their signs with larger ones in order to compete for visibility. The sizes permitted under the Bylaw are adequate, have proved to be environmentally appropriate and Burnaby's standards should be maintained.

Staff concur with the Sign Bylaw Review Committee recommendation that the present definition of "Sign Area" be confirmed.

SECTION 3.18 (Increase in Number of Freestanding Signs)

The proposal which the Sign Industry wishes to discuss would double the density of freestanding signs in most of Burnaby's commercial and industrial zones resulting in a proliferation of individual freestanding signs. While staff are always available for discussion, it is concluded that Council should confirm its decision that the present provisions of the Sign Bylaw regulating the maximum number of freestanding signs per street frontage should be retained.

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

The conclusion of our report of 1983 May 26 is worth repeating in order to bring the review process to an orderly conclusion.

"The Municipal Council in 1972 adopted the Sign Control Bylaw to provide for the need of the business community and others to have appropriate sign display, in balance with the effect of signs on the character of the Municipality. The success of the Bylaw in achieving this goal is evident, we believe, in the continuing improvement in the calibre of the signscape in our community with numerous examples of high quality, effective signs and the gradual elimination of former, out-of-scale or excessively garish displays.

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"In the review process, staff have sought to present a realistic balanced assessment of the proposals put before the Sign Bylaw Review Committee and Council one which, while not turning back the clock, recognizes the changing methods and devices of the Sign Industry and yet preserves the features of the Bylaw which ensure order, appropriate scale and suitable standards of compatibility with buildings, streets and other elements of the urban environment."

The latest industry proposals discussed in this report run counter to the fundamental principles on which the Bylaw is based, and if implemented would negate improvements that have been achieved. They are therefore not supported.

As previously mentioned, staff would be pleased to meet with Sign Industry representatives as the detailed Bylaw amendments are prepared to clarify any technical questions that may arise.



A. L. PARR
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION

ALP:lf

cc: Municipal Solicitor
Chief Building Inspector

Attachment: APPENDIX I

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A P P E N D I X I

REFERENCE NO.:

Section 3.4

SUBJECT:

Definition of "Sign Animated" relative to Illuminated Changing Message System (ICMS) Signs.

COUNCIL DECISION
(1983 MAY 30):

Council authorized the Municipal Solicitor to prepare a text amendment that would permit ICMS fascia signs in C3, C4 and P2 Districts subject to a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum area of 150 square feet.

SIGN INDUSTRY
REQUESTS:

- a. That the maximum area of an ICMS sign be increased from 150 sq.ft. to 180 sq.ft.
- b. That ICMS signs be permitted as freestanding signs as well as fascia signs.
- c. That the maximum area of an ICMS sign be permitted on both faces of a freestanding sign (i.e. that the maximum area of a freestanding sign be increased to 360 sq.ft.).
- d. That the maximum area of an ICMS fascia sign not be limited to 180 sq.ft. but be computed as a percentage of the wall surface to which the sign is attached (i.e. no maximum area).
- e. To extend the proposed Districts within which ICMS are to be permitted (i.e. C3, C4, P2) to all sign districts in the Municipality.

STAFF COMMENT:

ICMS signs are a special, high-impact type of display that, if permitted, should be reserved for the most intensive commercial areas, and used in a form that will not promote a strip-commercial image.

Without commenting in detail, it is clear that the current proposals of the Sign Industry would virtually remove all control of the size of ICMS signs, permit them in all districts in the Municipality, place existing conforming signs at a disadvantage, emphasize the undesirable strip-commercial appearance of the sign, and allow them to be established in a form which is particularly unsuitable to pedestrian-oriented high-density commercial areas.

CONCLUSION:

The new proposals of the Sign Industry are clearly unacceptable and staff conclusion is that the Council should confirm its decision of 1983 May 30.

However, the Sign Bylaw Committee has recommended that further discussion take place on these items and, if it is Council's wish, staff will endeavour to find out why the Sign Industry is pressing for standards for ICMS signs that are completely incompatible with the Burnaby Sign Bylaw and current Burnaby community standards.

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REFERENCE NO.:

Section 3.5

SUBJECT:

Definition of "Sign Area" to permit doubling
the size of Freestanding Signs.

COUNCIL DECISION
1983 MAY 30:

Council confirmed the present definition of
"Sign Area".

SIGN INDUSTRY
REQUEST:

That the method of computing the area of multi-
faced freestanding signs be amended, to allow
each face of a multi-faced sign an area of 64
square feet.

STAFF COMMENT:

There can be no support for a proposition that
would result in increasing the size of freestanding
signs, leading to a need for owners of existing
signs to replace their signs with larger ones in
order to compete for visibility. The sizes permitted,
under the Bylaw are adequate, have proved to be
environmentally appropriate and Burnaby's standards
should be maintained.

CONCLUSION:

Staff concur with the Sign Bylaw Committee recom-
mendation that the present definition of "Sign
Area" be confirmed.

REFERENCE NO.: Section 3.18

SUBJECT: Increase in number of Freestanding Signs
per street frontage.

COUNCIL DECISION
1983 MAY 30:
Council confirmed the present provisions of
the Sign Bylaw regulating the maximum number
of freestanding signs per street frontage.

SIGN INDUSTRY
REQUEST:
That more discussion take place on this item.

STAFF COMMENT:
The proposal which the Sign Industry wishes to
discuss would in effect double the density
of freestanding signs in most of Burnaby's
commercial and industrial zones, resulting in
a proliferation of individual freestanding signs.

CONCLUSION:
That Council confirm its decision that the present
provisions of the Sign Bylaw regulating the maxi-
mum number of freestanding signs per street frontage
should be retained. Staff are always prepared to
meet with Sign Industry representatives but their
expectations should not be raised by endorsing their
request to propose a new formula.