

March 15, 2011



City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor & Council

Fr: Tara Rickaby, Planning Administrator on behalf of Ad Hoc Committee

Re: Signage Proposal – McLeod Park

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Council of the City of Kenora approves the request of Pattison Outdoor Advertising, agent for Canadian Pacific Railway for the following variances to Sign By-law No. 115-2010:

- 1) To section 8.1.1(b) to permit the location of a static digital billboard to be located at a specific site, east of McLeod Park, within the Harbourtown Centre Area; and
- 2) To section 4.1(h) to permit the location of a sign which does not relate to any uses, or uses, of the premises located on the same property;
- 3) To 7.3.1. Table D – Ground Sign - To permit the area and height of the sign; and
- 4) To 8.1.2. Table E – Ground Sign - To permit the area and height of the sign; and

That the variance is conditional upon the following;

- 1) The materials used to construct the sign include granite and pine, or a pine look, which are consistent with the materials used in the revitalization projects associated with the Harbourtown Centre;
- 2) The utilities required for the sign be located underground;
- 3) Samples of the proposed materials be submitted, together with a site plan and building permit application, to the City of Kenora Building Department; and;
- 4) The final location of the sign be approved by the City of Kenora in consideration of underground utilities and proximity to snow clearing area;

That this variance is for one static digital billboard only and that all other billboards and their foundations be removed;

THAT the proposal of February 1st, 2011, submitted by Rob Sedgwick of Pattison Outdoor Advertising, forms the basis for the agreement by the City of Kenora, notwithstanding that a destination sign will not be permitted; and

This variance is being approved because the static digital billboard, per Section 2 Intent, of the Sign By-law:

- (a) is appropriate in size, number and location to the type of activity or use to which it pertains
- (b) provides reasonable and appropriate means for the public to locate and identify facilities, business, services and events without difficulty or confusion;
- (c) is compatible with surrounding activities or uses
- (d) protects and enhance the aesthetic qualities and visual character of the City
- (e) is consistent with the City's planning, urban design and heritage objectives
- (f) does not create a distraction, or safety hazard, for pedestrians and motorists
- (g) minimizes adverse impacts on nearby property; and
- (h) balances the public's right to expression with the purpose and intent of this By-law.

BACKGROUND:

The Property and Planning Committee asked an Ad Hoc Committee, composed of a BIZ representative, a Harbourtown Centre representative, the Parks Supervisor, Sign Administrator, a member of Council and the Planning Administrator to make a recommendation with respect to a proposal by Pattison Outdoor Advertising to remove five existing billboards and replace them with one static digital billboard, and some destination signage.

The Committee met on March 1st and agreed on some basic assumptions:

- a) CPR and City are working in a cooperative environment towards beautification of the City of Kenora
- b) Beautification of this area, by removal of the existing billboard signs has been a goal of the City since approximately 2003
- c) Lakeview Drive is not a highway for the purposes of this report
- d) The Official Plan, in Section 4.3, addresses development of the Harbourtown Centre, and, in Section 4.4 establishes the Harbourtown Centre as a Community Improvement Area and Section 8 discusses the objectives of a Community Improvement Plan, one of which is to enhance the visual appearance of Community Improvement Areas
- e) The marketing of the advertising is not part of this discussion
- f) If there were not currently five billboards in the area, which have been the subject of discussion and a goal to having them removed, the Committee would not recommend a variance to the Sign By-law.

The existing condition is five existing billboard signs, staggered over approximately 189 metres. There is potential for driver distraction at each line of site point for each of these signs, in addition to Huskie the Muskie, the Goodwill Gyser and whatever events/activities are taking place in or around the bay (currently snow sculpture building and display). Other than the removal of four of the billboards, the other distractions are not anticipated to change.

The greenspace around the existing billboards is currently maintained by City forces. This practice is not anticipated to change.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the intent of the Official Plan, Downtown Revitalization projects, the Sign By-law and the MTO submission and reviewed the Transportation Study (Lombard North Group), and air photography, in addition to discussion of the intent of the Downtown Revitalization projects.

The Transportation Study (Lombard North Group) was reviewed by the City's Risk Management and Loss Prevention Officer who commented as follows: "I have reviewed the Transport Safety Assessment Report prepared by the Lombard North Group regarding the placing of a static digital billboard along Lakeview Drive. The information contained in the report as well as information I have found on the internet regarding these types of signs leads me to believe that there would be no safety issues related to this type of sign. I feel that this type of sign would be no more distracting to a driver than a traditional billboard".

Budget: N/A – CPR/Pattison to pay all costs

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements: Notice by agenda of Property and Planning Committee and Council, Canadian Pacific Railway, Pattison Outdoor Advertising