



City of
Peterborough

To: **Members of the Planning Committee**

From: **Ken Hetherington, Manager, Planning Division**

Meeting Date: **January 20, 2014**

Subject: **Report PLPD14-004**
Interim Control By-law
Electronic Signs

Purpose

A report to recommend the approval of an Interim Control By-law to prohibit the issuance of permits for electronic signs until the completion of further consultation and research.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report PLPD14-004 dated January 20, 2014, of the Manager, Planning Division, as follows:

- a) That the presentation by staff be received for information.
- b) That staff be directed to undertake a review and recommend potential amendments to the Sign By-law pertaining to Electronic Signs.
- c) That an Interim Control By-law be passed in accordance with Exhibit "A" attached to Report PLPD14-004 prohibiting the issuance of a permit for an electronic sign for a period of one year from the date of the passing of the By-law to allow time for the completion of consultation and further research.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budget or financial implications to the City arising from the approval of the recommendation.

Background

Late in August, 2013, City staff conducted a public consultation meeting at the Public Library concerning Electronic Signs. Approximately 45 people attended the evening meeting.

Currently, the Sign By-law defines an Electronic Sign as “a sign with intermittent lighting in the form of letters, numerals or pictures”. The definition was crafted twelve years ago. Since that time, technological advancements have allowed for significant changes to this type of sign. Originally, when the present Sign By-law was written, Electronic Signs were typically static text or pictorial messages, or they may have scrolled across a screen, which may have changed every few seconds on the display. With recent advancements in LED technology, they now have video capability. Electronic Signs can now vary in colour and light intensity, they can flash, are able to have continuous animation, with rapid changes in advertising copy.

Concerns have been raised by citizens regarding the effect the signs have on the City’s general appearance, on public safety and the night sky. The meeting in August 2013 was arranged to solicit feedback from concerned citizens, special interest groups and representatives from the sign industry. The meeting concluded with a plan to strike a committee consisting of a cross section of people who have an interest in Electronic Signs.

This past fall, an on-line survey was conducted asking people what their perspectives were with respect to Electronic Signs and what land-use categories might be most appropriate for them. The vast majority of respondents expressed concern with electronic signs that include varying light intensity, excessive light, flashing and movement.

Analysis

Staff’s research thus far has revealed that Electronic signs have evolved into three basic types:

- § *Electronic Changeable Copy Signs*: Displays non-pictorial text information. The text is generally static but can change or travel across the screen.

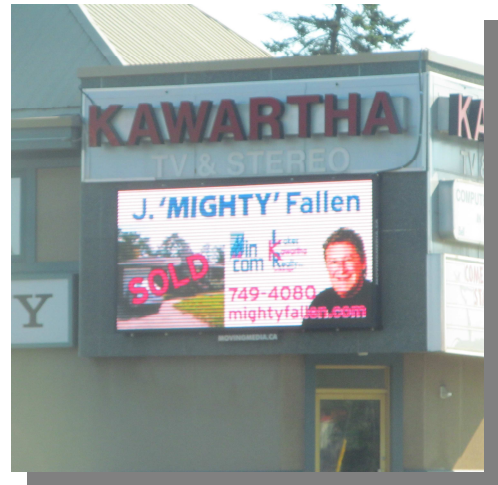
This was the typical electronic sign seen in the City when the current Sign By-law was enacted.

- § *Electronic Graphic Display Signs:* Displays static images where the message change sequence is accomplished instantly or by means of a fade.

Typical billboards are now being replaced with this type of sign, which can display a multitude of third party advertising and can be seen from a greater distance.

- § *Video Display Signs:* Display is characterized by motion often with pictorial imagery. The intensity of light emitted from these signs can vary.

A video display sign appears to be the most controversial as they are purposely designed to demand a person's attention. A preliminary review of a good number of other municipality's Sign By-laws has revealed that this type of sign is mostly prohibited.



There continues to be pressure to permit the establishment of additional electronic signs in the City of Peterborough. Given the need for further participation by individuals with an interest in electronic signs and the concerns with light intensity, public safety and the City's streetscapes, Staff are recommending to err on the side of caution and pass an interim control by-law until a "made in Peterborough solution" for amendments to the Sign By-law can be recommended to Council.

Staff are making a presentation to the Planning Committee to provide further information regarding the review of the Sign By-law with respect to electronic signs.

Submitted by,

Ken Hetherington,
Manager, Planning Division

Prepared by,

Concurred with,

Brian Buchardt,
Planner, Urban Design

Malcolm Hunt, Director
Planning and Development Services

Contact Name:

Brian Buchardt
Planner, Urban Design
Planning & Development Services
Phone: 705-742-7777 Ext. 1734
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755
Fax: 705-742-5218
E-Mail: bbuchardt@peterborough.ca

Attachment:

Exhibit A - Draft Interim Control By-law

EXHIBIT A

Page 1 of 2

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH

BY-LAW NUMBER 14- _____

**BEING A BY-LAW TO ESTABLISH INTERIM CONTROL PROVISIONS FOR
THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH TO PROHIBIT THE ISSUANCE OF PERMITS
FOR ELECTRONIC SIGNS FOR PERIOD OF FOUR MONTHS TO ALLOW
FOR THE COMPLETION OF CONSULTATION AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH BY THE COUNCIL
THEREOF HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS subsection 38 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. P.13, as amended, permits the Council of a municipality to pass an interim control by-law where the Council has directed that a review or study be undertaken in respect of land use planning policies within the municipality or in any defined area or areas of thereof;

AND WHEREAS Council of the Corporation of the City of Peterborough deems it appropriate to enact such interim control by-law.

AND WHEREAS further consultation and research is necessary in order to determine the appropriate regulations for Electronic Signs in the City of Peterborough;

NOW THEREFORE THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF PETERBOROUGH BY
THE COUNCIL THEREOF HEREBY EXACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. For the purposes of this interim control by-law, “Electronic Sign” shall be a sign with intermittent lighting in the form of letters, numerals or pictures as defined by the City’s Sign By-law #02-045.
2. While this by-law is in force and effect no permits shall be issued for electronic signs within the municipal boundaries of the City of Peterborough.
3. This By-law shall be in force and effect for a period of one year from the date of passing of this by-law.

By-law read a first, second and third time this day of , 2014.

Daryl Bennett, Mayor

John Kennedy, City Clerk