



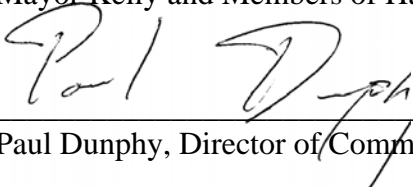
PO Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

## Item No. 2

Halifax Regional Council  
June 10, 2008

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
Paul Dunphy, Director of Community Development

**DATE:** May 9, 2008

**SUBJECT:** Temporary Sign By-law Amendments

### INFORMATION REPORT

#### ORIGIN

Motions of Regional Council to initiate amendments to By-law S-800 (*Respecting Requirements for the Licencing of Temporary Signs*) regarding:

1. the period of time that Mobile Sign may be permitted (October 24, 2006);
2. limiting the use of mobile signs within the Cole Harbour/Westphal and Sackville Drive plan areas (October 24, 2006); and
3. review of sandwich boards signs provisions (November 13, 2007).

#### BACKGROUND

By-law S-800 *Respecting Requirements for the Licencing of Temporary Signs* (also known as the "Temporary Sign By-law") came into effect on November 18, 2006. The By-law sets out requirements for licences of temporary signs on public and private property within HRM. The By-law deals with a variety of sign types such as mobile signs, sandwich boards, planter box, etc.

In addition to addressing the issues raised by Council (above), conducting a by-law review after it having been in effect for nearly two years affords the opportunity to address other issues raised by the public, the sign industry, as well as by HRM's enforcement officials. Certain housekeeping amendments (corrections/clarifications) can also be made at the same time.

## **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this information report is to advise Council that staff have begun the process of reviewing the Temporary Sign By-law. The review process will include consultation with industry, Business Improvement District Commission's (BIDC), and others as needed, to address some of the concerns that have been raised with the new By-law. Staff intend to draft amendments to the By-law, and bring those back to Regional Council for consideration.

In addition to the issues raised by Council, as outlined in the "Origin" section of this report, staff have received issues and questions raised by Councillors and others. Attachment A contains brief overview of some of the issues and questions raised. These as well as other issues with the by-law will be reviewed, and recommendations brought forward to Council. Until such time as these amendments have been brought forward to Council, enforcement of sandwich boards is on hold until the review is complete and amendments have been considered by Council.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The costs to process this application can be accommodated within the approved operating budget for C310.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

None

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A            Issues/Questions Raised

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by:            Kurt Pyle, Supervisor, Planning Applications, 490-7066

Report Approved by:



Sharon Bond, Manager, Subdivision & Land Use Compliance

**Attachment “A”**

**Issues/Questions Raised  
Regarding the Temporary Sign By-law**

---

- 1) Can HRM ‘grandfather’ signs that pre-dated the effective by-law date?
- 2) Can artistic merit be considered in the review of some temporary signs?
- 3) Sandwich boards, while important for small businesses, are a potential hazard to public safety, particularly those who are visually impaired, and physically challenged.
- 4) Can HRM consider issuing licences to permit upper floor tenants a sandwich board at street level? As the by-law currently stands, if there is no direct access to a street, HRM refuses a licence.
- 5) Can HRM consider amending the period of time that mobile signs are left up? The regulation currently requires 60 days down for every 60 days up. Would HRM consider amending the by-law to allow mobile signs to remain up for 120 days, after which they must come down for 30 days?
- 6) Can the by-law address issues arising with ‘off site’ advertising? E.g. when one mall (e.g. Forest Hills Mall) is divided into several lots, a mobile sign is technically ‘off site’ if it is not on the same lot as the business, even though lot lines may not be evident ‘on the ground’.
- 7) Only one temporary sign per premises is permitted, but larger multi-tenant properties have concerns with this. They have expressed that they believe that as long as they meet the 100’ separation rule, then clutter is eliminated, and there should be no need to control the number of signs per property.
- 8) Planter box signs for apartment buildings.
- 9) Special Events Signs are permitted to be up for one month, provided after that, they come down for month. Churches, non-profits, and community centres have expressed concerns with this as a difficulty, and requested all temporary signs be permitted to stay up for 120 days, and down for 30.
- 10) Sandwich board size limits are different on public rather than private property and this has been cited as confusing.
- 11) Sign companies can be ticketed for infractions of the by-law, as well as the owners. Sign companies have expressed concerns with this practice as only sign owners are notified of the infraction.

- 12) What is the number of complaints received through recent enforcement of S-800?
- 13) Staff needs to consult with the Advisory Committee for Persons With Disabilities on the proposed amendments.
- 14) The report needs to include a review of sidewalk widths to determine if there is adequate space for sandwich boards.