

North West Community Council
April 10, 2008

TO: North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: Gail Harnish / for
Ann Merritt, Chair
North West Planning Advisory Committee

RE: Case 01102 - Ground Signs on Sackville Drive

DATE: April 3, 2008

ORIGIN

North West Planning Advisory Committee meeting - April 2, 2008

RECOMMENDATION

The North West Planning Advisory Committee recommend that North West Community Council:

1. Give First Reading to the proposed amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law to amend the ground sign provisions for the PR and PC Zones, as shown in Attachment "A" of the staff report dated February 20, 2008, and schedule a public hearing; and
2. Approve the proposed amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law to amend the ground sign provisions for the PR and PC Zones, as shown in Attachment "A" of the staff report dated February 20, 2008.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff report dated February 20, 2008

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report prepared by: Gail Harnish, Admin/PAC Coordinator, 490-4937
Report reviewed by: Ann Merritt, Chair, North West PAC

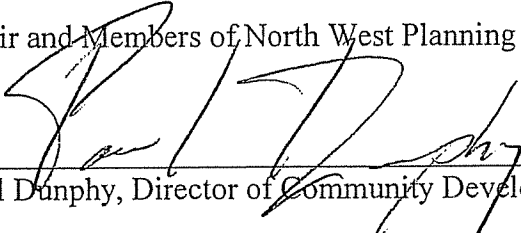


PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

North West Planning Advisory Committee
April 2, 2008

TO: Chair and Members of North West Planning Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY:


Paul Dunphy, Director of Community Development

DATE: February 20, 2008

SUBJECT: Case 01102: Ground Signs on Sackville Drive

ORIGIN

On December 11, 2007- North West Community Council requested staff initiate the process to review the ground sign provisions in the Pedestrian Retail (PR) Zone, Pinehill/Cobequid (PC) Zone and the Outdoor Display Court (ODC) Zone of the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law (LUB).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that North West Planning Advisory Committee recommend that North West Community Council:

1. Give First Reading to the proposed amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law to amend the ground sign provisions for the PR and PC Zones, as shown in Attachment "A", and schedule a public hearing; and
2. Approve the proposed amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law to amend the ground sign provisions for the PR and PC Zones, as shown in Attachment "A".

BACKGROUND

The ODC Zone was removed from the LUB in 2006 and the proposed amendments will only effect the PR and PC Zones.

The PR and PC zones cover the majority of properties along Sackville Drive, except for the Downsview Mall and large scale commercial areas found near the intersection with Beaver Bank Road (Map 1). The current signage provisions for the PR and PC Zones were created as part of the Sackville Drive Planning Strategy (SPS) adopted in 2005. The SPS process looked at the challenges facing Sackville Drive and determined that signage was problematic. The SPS contains a number of signage goals for Sackville Drive: to reduce sign clutter and proliferation, increase compatibility of signs with architecture and scale of buildings and create a sense of identity and uniformity through signage (Attachment B).

The PC and PR zoned portions of Sackville Drive were identified as areas where signage clutter was an issue. To control clutter, the LUB was amended to reduce the scale of signs in the PC and PR Zones (Attachment C). The height of signs was reduced from 25 feet to 15 feet and the sign area was reduced from unlimited square footage to 25 ft². The number of signs were limited by permitting one sign per building and 400 feet of road frontage, as opposed to the one sign per business permitted in the past (Attachment D).

While the goal of the amendments was to reduce signage clutter, they have not impacted development as quickly as anticipated and the provisions may need to be re-evaluated. The landscape of Sackville Drive is dotted with numerous large, outdated “grandfathered” signs, with the newer “lollipop” style single signs and with various forms of temporary signs. In addition, the new restrictions have made it very difficult for multi-tenant buildings to advertise as they are limited to a 25 ft² sign face which does not provide enough legible space for all tenants. In recent years, a number of permit applications for ground signs have been refused as they exceeded the 25 ft² maximum and staff have observed an increase in the use of temporary signs, which are discouraged by the SPS.

DISCUSSION

The goal of this project is to develop ground sign provisions which balance the policy directive to reduce sign clutter while addressing signage needs of local businesses. It is staff opinion that effective sign provisions would:

- honour the policy goals developed in the SPS;
- allow for more creative and attractive signs; and
- encourage businesses to replace outdated and alternate sign forms with higher quality, permanent signs.

Public Information Meeting

On February 7, 2008 HRM hosted a workshop which was opened to property owners under the PR and PC Zones, members of the Sackville Drive Business Association and representatives from the

sign industry (Attachment E). In addition to general advertisement in the newspaper, attendees of the workshop and those notified of the workshop will receive written notification of the Public Hearing.

The goal of the workshop was to generate ideas to:

- improve the advertising opportunities for businesses, especially for multi-tenant businesses;
- give businesses and sign designers some flexibility to create innovative signs;
- increase the visual interest of Sackville Drive with attractive signage and less clutter; and
- encourage construction of ground signs versus temporary signs for less clutter and a more attractive product.

Staff presented workshop participants with some options for single and multi-tenant signs to generate discussion. A number of aspects of signage regulations were identified by staff and the public that require discussion. The following is a discussion of these issues and staff recommendations for resolution:

Height

The current height maximum of 15 feet was used as a starting point for the workshop discussions. Participants were unanimous that the current height was very limiting; the 'empty' space at the bottom of signs, required for snow clearance and visibility, limits the available advertising space to approximately 10 feet. Staff are recommending increasing the maximum height to allow for more advertising opportunities.

Recommendations:

- Place a 20' cap on the total height for multi-tenant signs and a 15' height maximum for single tenant signs.
- Encourage ground signs as the main advertising venue by increasing height to 25' for multi-tenants and 20' for single tenants, if a changeable copy sign is included.
- Require all portions of the sign meet the height maximum including the supports, decorative features, site identification and changeable copy sign.

Changeable Copy Signs

Changeable copy signs were supported as an excellent option for ground signs as they provide an opportunity for businesses to advertise special events and promotions. Staff are encouraging the use of changeable copy signs, as an alternative to mobile signage, by increasing the maximum height for single and multi-tenant signs. Participants supported permitting electronic signs, provided they were not animated. Currently, the LUB does permit electronic signs but prohibits any flashing or moving illumination.

Recommendation:

- Ensure changeable copy signs are secondary to static advertising by limiting the size to 50 ft² for multiple-tenants and 40 ft² for single tenants.

Sign Area & Width

There was some discussion at the workshop of limiting the overall square footage of sign faces and limiting individual tenants to 25 ft². Based on feedback from the meeting, staff are of the opinion that these measures are not necessary. Further, participants were in favour of introducing a maximum width to prevent wide, billboard style signs which could create more visual clutter. Limiting the height and width of signs will create a limit on the overall square footage. The following is a table outlining the maximum sign face area permitted with the proposed amendments.

Type of Sign	Features	Sign Face (ft ²)
Multi-tenant	regular sign 12.5' by approx. 15'	190
	sign plus changeable copy sign 12.5 by approx. 20'	240
Single tenant	regular sign 8' by approx 10'	80
	sign plus changeable copy sign 8' by approx. 15'	120

Recommendations:

- Limit sign face width to 12.5' for multi-tenant signs and 8' for single tenant signs.
- Encourage decorative features by increasing total maximum width of signs to 20' for multi-tenant signs and 15' for single tenant signs.

Decorative Features

To provide greater visual impact, decorative features are to be encouraged. Businesses could have wider signs by incorporating identification signage, structural details and decorative elements. Workshop participants also recognized the importance of site identification signs, which clearly identify the address and may include the common name of the building or plaza.

Recommendation:

- To further the policy goal of sign uniformity and identity, all new signs should provide legible site identification signage containing the civic address and be located along the street side, bottom or top portion of the sign.

Additional Signs

Allowing more ground signs and increasing fascia signage were raised at the public workshop. Staff do not recommend increasing the number of ground signs as more signs could lead to more visual clutter. It is staff opinion that the proposed larger ground signs should provide adequate advertising opportunity and that the current provision of one ground sign per building or one per four hundred feet of road frontage is sufficient. Increasing fascia signage is also not

recommended as the standard throughout the LUB is ten percent of the wall area, which is a typical ratio for fascia signage in the municipality.

As the SPS objective is to reduce sign proliferation, any amendments which propose increasing the number of signs would require a plan amendment. Staff are recommending limited amendments at this time, which should be instituted and evaluated before undertaking a large scale plan amendment.

Council may wish to take steps to further reduce sign clutter by amending the Temporary Sign By-law to restrict the use of temporary signs in these areas. This will require a separate planning process to amend the By-law.

Conclusion

SPS policy on signage speaks to controlling clutter and proliferation; there are no specific controls on the height or size of signs. Enabling businesses to meet their signage goals on one large, permanent sign is likely to reduce sign clutter by reducing the need for additional signs.

Requiring site identification signage will create a uniform feature celebrating the location of the business in the Sackville Drive business community. Visual interest will also be created by enabling larger signs with decorative features and variable advertising. Staff recommend that NWCC approve the proposed amendments, contained in Attachment A of this report, to the ground sign provisions for PC and PR Zones along Sackville Drive as they are in keeping with direction from the community and policy objectives.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

None. The costs to process this application can be accommodated within the approved C310 operating budget.

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

1. Council may choose to approve the proposed amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law. This is Staff's recommended course of action for the reasons described in this report.
2. Council may choose to refuse the proposed amendments to the Land Use By-law, and in doing so, must provide reasons based on a conflict with MPS policies. This alternative is not recommended as staff are satisfied that the proposed amendments are consistent with the policies and intent of the MPS.

ATTACHMENTS

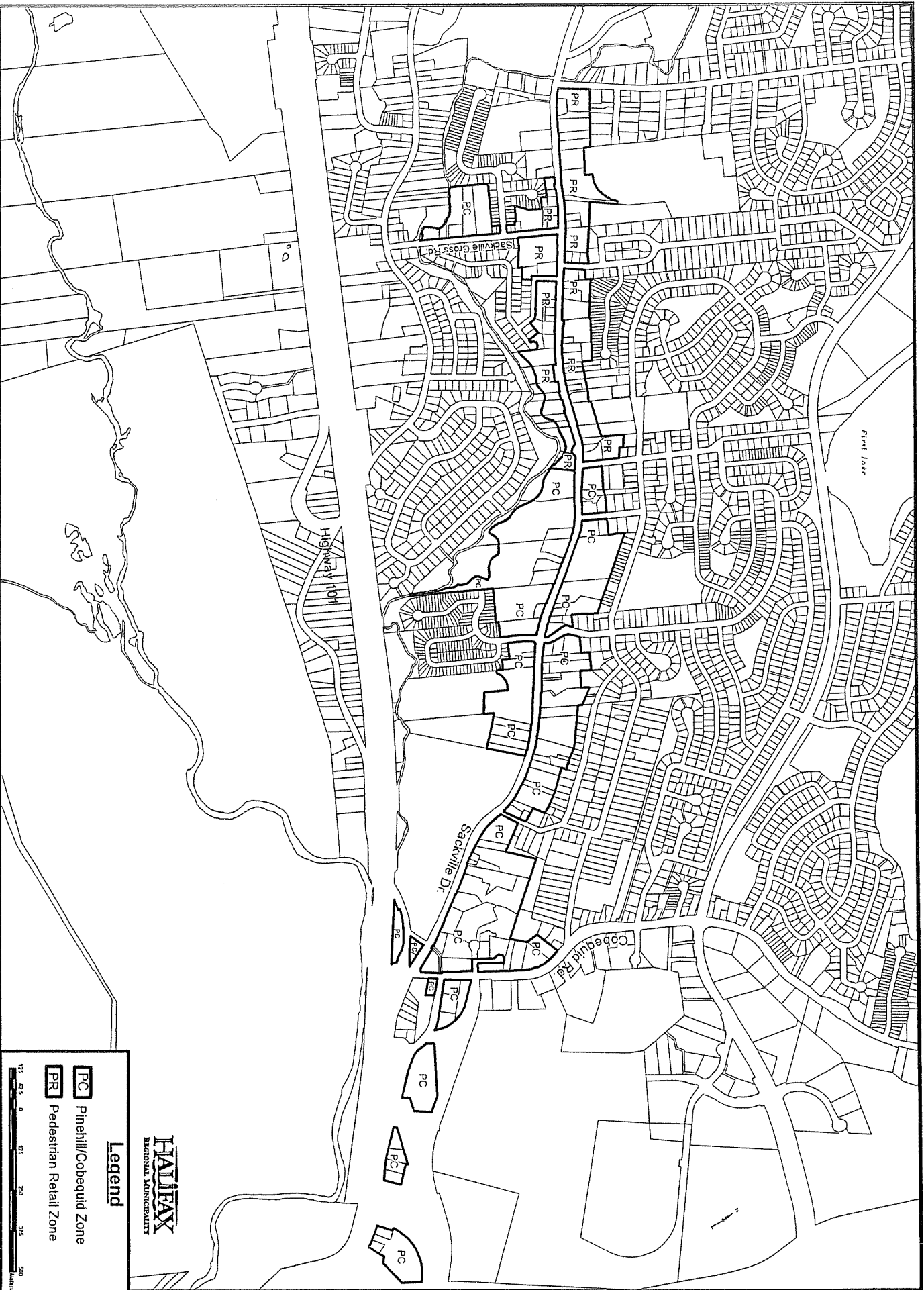
Map 1: Zoning Map
Attachment A: Amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law
Attachment B: Excerpts of Relevant MPS Policies
Attachment C: Relevant LUB Sections
Attachment D: Comparison of Past and Current Signage Regulations
Attachment E: Public Information Meeting Minutes

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.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: Leticia Smillie, Planner 1- Planning Applications: Community Development 869-4747



Report Approved by: Austin French, Manager of Planning Services, 490-6717



HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Legend

- PC** Pinehill/Cobequid Zone
- PR** Pedestrian Retail Zone



Attachment A
Amendments to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law

BE IT ENACTED by the North West Community Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law as enacted by the Halifax Regional Municipality on the 26th day of March, 1996, and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on the 17th day of May, 1996 as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:

1) Amend Part 2 (Definitions) by adding the following:

Changeable copy signage means any portion of a sign which provides for periodic changes in the material composing the sign or the message and includes both electronically and manually changeable signs.

Site identification signage means any portion of a sign which lists the civic number and street name of the building and may include the common name for the building, provided it does not directly reference a business name.

Sign face means the area or portion of an advertising structure upon which the advertising message is displayed, excluding structure, decoration and site identification.

2) Amend Part 7 (General Streetscape Design- Signage), Section 9 (Ground Signs) by deleting subsection (1) and replacing it with the following:

“(1) exceed a height of

- (a) twenty-five (25) feet (7.6 m) in the Downsview Complex Zones (DC-1, DC-2, and DC-3) and the Large Scale Commercial Zone (LS);
- (b) fifteen (15) feet (4.5 m) for single tenant buildings and twenty (20) feet (6.1 m) for multi-tenant buildings in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR) and Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC); and
- (c) twenty (20) feet (6.1 m) for single tenant buildings and twenty-five (25) feet (7.6 m) for multi-tenant buildings in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR) and Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC) provided the sign includes changeable copy signage.”

3) Amend Part 7 (General Streetscape Design- Signage), Section 9 (Ground Signs) by deleting subsection (10) and replacing it with the following:

“(10) exceed a sign face width of eight (8) feet (2.4 m) for single tenant buildings and twelve and a half (12.5) feet (3.8 m) for multi-tenant buildings in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR) and Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC). All portions of the sign cannot exceed a total width of fifteen (15) feet (4.5 m) for single tenant buildings and twenty (20) feet (6.1 m) for multi-tenant buildings in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR) and Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC).”

4) Amend Part 7 (General Streetscape Design- Signage), Section 9 (Ground Signs) by adding the following subsections:

- “(11) be permitted in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR) and Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC) without clearly legible site identification signage listing the civic number and street name of the building. Site identification signage must be located at the top, the bottom or side of sign structure adjacent to the street.**
- (12) include changeable copy signage exceeding forty (40) square feet (3.7 sq.m) for single tenant buildings and fifty (50) square feet (4.6 sq.m) for multi-tenant buildings in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR) and Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC).”**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the amendment to the Land Use By-law for Sackville Drive, as set out above, was passed by a majority vote of the North West Community Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality at a meeting held on the ____ day of _____, 2008

GIVEN under the hands of the Municipal Clerk and Under the Corporate Seal of the Halifax Regional Municipality this ____ day of _____, 2008

Julia Horncastle
Acting Municipal Clerk

Attachment B
Excerpts of Relevant MPS Policies

6.1 Signage

The proliferation of commercial signage found along Sackville Drive is often blamed for the visual clutter that persists. Sign clutter is certainly not unique to Sackville Drive, rather it is quite common throughout most North American commercial strips. In fact, sign clutter is commonly viewed as the greatest challenge facing communities wishing to improve a commercial streetscape's visual appearance.

In Sackville, sign clutter can be linked to a historically lenient approach to sign control. Although a certain degree of control has always been in place, regulators historically chose to limit the level of controls placed on businesses along Sackville Drive. This approach was adopted based on a view that limited restrictions would ultimately attract more businesses to Sackville Drive.

Unfortunately, this approach to regulatory approach reflects an unawareness of the type of benefits that can be derived from a sound regulatory framework. Evidence has shown that a well planned and coordinated sign program can contribute to a commercial strip's overall visual attractiveness and viability.

Issues related to commercial signage on Sackville Drive can be broadly categorized as follows:

- (1) proliferation of signage;
- (2) lack of identifiable and uniform signage treatments;
- (3) visual clutter created by excessive signage; and
- (4) lack of compatible and complementary signage to building design and architecture.

... In recognition of a need for short term advertising opportunities, changeable copy signs should be encouraged in place of temporary or portable signs. Changeable copy signs could be permanent in nature, and provide a level of uniformity to the streetscape that would not be achieved through temporary signs. However, changeable letter signs should be included as part of a building or a permanent sign structure...

...Regulations to prevent ground signs from exceeding a specific area for each lineal foot of wall of the main building should also help. The maximum number of ground signs per business should be limited to one. For permanent ground signs, landscaping at the base of the sign should be required. Setbacks for sign bases should be increased to ensure that they do not intrude on the pedestrian environment...

... Policy SS-2

Within the Land Use By-law provisions shall be established to regulate signage in all Zones on Sackville Drive. Sign controls shall address the nature, size, location, number, and type of signs (including signboards, projecting signs, canopies, and window signs) as well as their illumination. The primary intention of the sign controls shall be to:

- (a) prevent the chaotic proliferation and avoid the visual clutter created by excessive signage;
- (b) create an identifiable and uniform signage program for Sackville Drive;
- (c) promote building-mounted signage compatible with, and complementary to, building design and architecture; and
- (d) identify place, name and product, and provide price, service and directional information. (RC-Sep26/06;E-Nov18/06)

Attachment C
Relevant LUB sections

9. No ground sign shall:
- (1) exceed a height of twenty-five (25) feet (7.6 m) in the Downsvie Complex Zones (DC-1, DC-2, and DC-3) and the Large Scale Commercial Zone (LS) and exceed a height of fifteen (15) feet (4.5 m) in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR), Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC), and Outdoor Display Court Zone (ODC); (NWCC-May26/05;E-May28/05)
 - (3) be less than ten (10) feet (3 m) from any street;
 - (5) Where a multiple tenancy building is occupied by more than one (1) separate business, each business shall be considered to be a separate premise for the purpose of determining the number of signs permitted. Notwithstanding, only one ground sign shall be permitted per multiple tenancy building or one ground sign per 400 feet (121.9 m) of street frontage;
 - (8) The maximum number of sign faces shall be two, which shall be affixed back to back;
 - (10) The maximum area per sign face shall be 2.32 square metres (25 square feet) for a sign with a maximum height of fifteen (15) feet (4.5 m) in the Pedestrian Retail Zone (PR), Pinehill/Cobequid Zone (PC), and Outdoor Display Court Zone (ODC). (NWCC-May26/05;E-May28/05)

Attachment D
Comparison of Past and Present Signage Regulations

	Current	Past
Height	15'	25'
Area	25 ft2	unlimited
Setback	10' to street	10' to street
Number	1 per multi-tenant	1 per business

Attachment E
Public Information Meeting Minutes

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
PUBLIC WORKSHOP
CASE NO. 01102 - Ground Sign Regulations**

7:00 p.m.
Thursday, February 7, 2008
Sackville Heights Community Centre

STAFF IN

ATTENDANCE: Leticia Smillie, Planner I, HRM Planning Services
Andrew Bone, Senior Planner, HRM Planning Services
Mike Cowper, Development Technician, HRM Development Services
Cara McFarlane, Planning Controller, HRM Planning Services

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE: Councillor Bob Harvey, District 20
Councillor Brad Johns, District 19
Ann Merritt, Member of North West Planning Advisory
Walter Regan, Member of North West Planning Advisory
Committee and Sackville River Association

PUBLIC IN

ATTENDANCE: Approximately 12

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:05 p.m.

1. Opening remarks/Introductions/Purpose of workshop - Leticia Smillie

Leticia Smillie introduced herself as the planner guiding this application through the planning process; Mike Cowper, HRM Development Services; Andrew Bone, HRM Planning Services; Bob Harvey, Councillor for District 20; and Cara McFarlane, HRM Planning Services.

The purpose of the workshop is to talk about ground sign regulations for portions of Sackville Drive and to find out ways to improve signage while keeping with the community vision for the area.

Ms. Smillie reviewed the agenda.

2. Presentation of Proposal - Leticia Smillie

North West Community Council (NWCC) has asked staff to look at the ground sign provisions for the PC (Pinehill/Cobequid) and PR (Pedestrian/Retail) Zones. A map was displayed showing where the PC and PR Zones are located along Sackville Drive.

Tonight's discussion will be looking at how to make changes to the Sackville Drive Land Use By-law (LUB) to improve signage while keeping with vision of the Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS). The signage goals for the SPS for this area are to reduce sign clutter, to increase the compatibility of sign with architecture and the scale of buildings, and to increase the sense of identity and uniformity of signage on Sackville Drive.

Today's signage provisions were adopted as part of the new SPS which was introduced in 2005. The PC and PR Zones were identified as two areas where signage clutter was an issue and where signs needed to be reduced to prevent further clutter.

A table was shown with what would have been allowed in the past and what is permitted under the current regulations.

The height was reduced from 25 to 15 feet and the total area was reduced from unlimited to 25 square feet. The setback from the street remained the same. Today the number of signs permitted is tied to the building and lot frontage whereas in the past the number was tied to the number of businesses within that building.

The goal of the new plan was to reduce signs and clutter; however, it is evident that this has not occurred. Today, there is a mixture of old, large, grandfathered signs, small single tenant signs and some mobile signs.

Smaller signs has made it difficult for multi tenant businesses to provide enough space on their sign for a ledgeable area for each tenant. This is because regardless the number of tenants in a building, advertising is limited to the 25 square foot maximum.

Tonight's challenge is to come up with some ideas to improved advertising opportunities especially for multi tenant buildings, to give businesses and designers the flexibility to create innovative signs, to increase the visual interest along Sackville Drive, and to encourage ground signs versus temporary signs.

A sample of a multi-tenant sign was shown. Staff is suggesting that the 15 foot height restriction remain in keeping with the policy intent to have the scale of signs match the buildings. The 15 feet is measured from the street if the lot is flat. For lots that slope up the measurement starts at the base of the sign. A width of 12.5 feet and a maximum sign area of 200 square feet were suggested. It is recommended to keep a 25 square foot area per tenant (maximum of 50 square feet if both sides used) as a maximum. Some exemptions from the 200 square feet would include structure (poles), decoration features, site identification, and possibly a changeable area (possibly an LED sign).

A sample of a single tenant sign was shown. Staff suggested retaining the 25 square foot maximum area, 15 feet in height but looking at possibly the same exemptions for decoration features, site identification and a changeable area.

3. Breakout out into groups

The group broke up into three groups at three separate tables each with copies of the sample signs.

All groups were asked to make comments and suggestions on the signs indicating what they agreed/disagreed with and what they would like to see along Sackville Drive.

Group 1 - Presentation

Multi- Tenant Sign:

- Disagree with the 15 foot height and 12.5 foot width (to the outside) as it would not work. Would be better if it was measured to the inside of the structure.
- The 25 square foot sign per tenant would work but it won't fit on the sign.
- Agree with the maximum area of 200 square feet.
- A sign is usually built no closer than 4 or 5 feet to the ground; therefore, that only leaves 10 feet for height. The numbers don't add up.
- A business would want an LED sign at least 4 or 5 feet off the ground; therefore, losing more sign space.
- A building that faces more than one side on a street should be permitted to have a second sign on the other side of the building.
- Will the signs be permitted to have LED changeable messages on them?

Single Tenant Sign:

- The size of the sign has to tie into the size of the building.
- The height is fine as long as the size can accompany it.
- A changeable sign has to be reachable.
- Would like some flexibility or variances if the regulations don't fit.
- Need more room to identify more than six tenants.

One resident mentioned that the problems seem to lie with existing businesses with older signs. These should be addressed before scrutinizing the signs for new businesses.

Ms. Smillie explained that the fascia sign is separate from the building sign.

Group 2 - Presentation

- There should be a scale relationship between the single and multi-tenant signs. Over time, in a multi-unit building, there could be a changing number of tenants. A single tenant building could become multi-tenant. Ideally, you could have a single sign that can adapt.
- The scale of the sign needs to relate to the size of the building.
- Additional signage is needed for larger buildings.
- What equals a sign face? Could you have a triangular or box sign with multiple faces given the particulars of the site. If a triangular sign was permitted, would each face have an equivalent number of square feet (200 square feet for each side)?
- The height of the sign became an issue for both.

- Snow removal. Snow is often piled under a sign; therefore, the sign will need to be higher for visibility reasons.
- It was suggested to look at some signage readability studies that specify sign lettering and potential square footage.
- A variance procedure would be good.
- The changeable sign would be a tenant issue as to who uses it.
- Does a changeable sign equal an LED sign? The consensus from the group was that the LED signs should be permitted. It was suggested that animation be prevented.

Group 3 - Presentation

Multi-Tenant Sign:

- The square footage per tenant sign should be no less than 25 square feet.
- The 12.5 foot width to the outside of the poles is questionable. If the sign could be higher, it should also be wider to accommodate the 200 square footage.
- The structure and decorations should not be part of the total area.
- The materials used and changeable messages should be regulated.
- Limit the speed of the changing messages.

Single Tenant Sign:

- Feels the same as other groups about the 25 square foot area for a single tenant sign. It should be no less than 32 square feet, maybe more, to be visible.
- The id for the sign of the business address should be exempt from the square footage.
- The changeable area should be regulated as far as size. The message on an LED sign can be regulated for speed.
- The decoration on a sign should be exempt as well.

4. Questions/Comments

Ms. Smillie outlined the zone amendment process.

One resident asked if these proposed regulations are being used. Ms. Smillie mentioned that these proposed regulations have not yet been approved. New signs follow the regulations of the current Sackville Drive LUB. Also, if a sign has been discontinued for a period of more than six months, the replacement sign would follow the current regulations, according to the Municipal Government Act (MGA). Mr. Bone further explained that older existing signs are grandfathered. The resident thought it would make more sense if the business was grandfathered rather than the sign. Maybe change the definition for non-conforming signs.

One resident mentioned that if he knew what was being proposed when the Sackville Drive LUB went into effect, he would have been at the public hearing to oppose the amendments as it was poorly done and many businesses have suffered from it. The whole criteria of the existing LUB bears no relationship to reality or to the retail business. He suggested emphasizing that it is vital that the proposed sign by-law work for retailers because in the end they are the ones that count the most.

One resident mentioned that the regulations are very inconsistent throughout HRM. Ms. Smillie mentioned that the plans are community based and each one has their own regulations.

One resident wanted to know who voted for the first set of sign amendments. Councillor Harvey said the process was the same as this application. Mr. Bone mentioned that it is easier to focus on one issue at a time. During the plan review, many things on Sackville Drive were being changed. Council agrees there is a signage problem and requested staff look into fixing it.

One resident would like to see Council come up with plans that will enhance yet give regulations but certainly not undermine new businesses coming to the area. Bringing more business to the area should be encouraged. If the by-law is regulated too much, people will walk away.

5. Closing comments

Ms. Smillie encouraged the public to become involved in the visioning process that will be coming through the HRM Community Visioning meetings which will give the public an opportunity to comment on the whole of Sackville Drive and how it fits in with Sackville and HRM as a whole.

Ms. Smillie thanked everyone for coming to the meeting to express their comments and concerns.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m.