

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL, ON THURSDAY,
2004-JUN-10, COMMENCING AT 3:35 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillor L. J. Sherry, Chair

Members: Councillor R. A. Cantelon
Councillor W. J. Holdom

Staff:	B. N. Mehaffey	A. Tucker
	T. P. Seward	J. T. Bowden
	P. Murphy	C. Hambley
	P. Thorkelsson	

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

- (a) Minutes of the 2004-MAY-06 Meeting of the Planning, Environment and Development Standing Committee held in the Board Room, City Hall at 3:30 p.m.

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

2. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:

PERMITS, BYLAW AND PROPERTY SERVICES:

(1) Signage for Charitable Drives and Civic Events

The City's Sign Bylaw contains provisions to exempt philanthropic signage from the provisions of the sign bylaw provided the signs are less than 6.5 square feet in size. The exemption also extends to political and philanthropic signage on public property as well. To date, no guidelines have been put into place to direct how many of these signs may be placed in any one public location at any one time. Also, because these signs have been relatively few in number, and they have not attracted complaints, Staff have not actively enforced the 6.5 square foot size limit.

Staff are noting an increased number of inquiries from non-profit organizations about using public locations for their signage. In part this is happening due to Council's decision last year to limit the use of temporary portable signs and the fact that this type of advertising does not require a permit or large monetary investment. In addition, some of the organizations utilizing this form of signage to promote events may not be philanthropic in nature, and some of the organizations utilizing this form of signage are introducing advertising for other sponsoring businesses on their signs. Furthermore, in light of the aesthetic concerns Council dealt with related

to temporary portable signage and the potential for 'crowding' of philanthropic signage in high profile locations, Staff seek to clarify whether the Committee and Council wish the situation to be reviewed and guidelines developed to assist in avoiding what could be a developing problem with these signs.

The Permit Exemptions referenced above is Section 6(11) of the "SIGN BYLAW 1987 NO. 2850" as follows:

Subject to all other provisions of this Bylaw and notwithstanding Sections 5 and 7, the following signs may be erected or placed without a permit:

6(11) Temporary signs not exceeding 0.6 square meters (6.5 square feet) in area pertaining to drives or events of civic, philanthropic, educational or religious organizations, provided that said signs are posted only during said drive or no more than 30 days before said event and are removed no more than 7 days after an event. Signs located on or adjacent to any highway are subject to the provisions of City of Nanaimo "TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS BYLAW 1983 NO. 2600" and all amendments thereto.

The City's Traffic and Highways Bylaw was amended in 1993 and is now "TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS REGULATION BYLAW 1993 NO. 5000". The current bylaw provides that political campaign or charitable signs may be exhibited adjacent to any highway upon approval of the office of the Senior Manager of Corporate Administration upon a written undertaking stating the signs will be removed prior to a date not more than 30 days from the date of the referendum or election, upon providing security in the amount of \$200. and provided the signage is not placed on highway medians, affixed to utility poles or trees, or placed in such a manner to disrupt free passage or visibility of pedestrians or traffic.

Because such signage has been relatively problem free, the procedures in the Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw have never evolved. Instead, the signage has simply been erected in high profile locations where its placement does not compromise traffic or pedestrian safety. Over time Staff have noticed the following development:

1. Key locations on public right of way have developed as prime locations for civic, philanthropic, educational and religious drives and events, and fund raising and event advertising signage is routinely placed in these locations without any formal consultation or approval from the City.
2. Virtually none of the signage placed is less than 6.5 square feet in size and is usually 32 square feet.
3. Many of the signs include the names and logos of private sponsors; some of the signage includes blatant advertisement space on its signs for a sponsor.
4. The charitable, philanthropic, or educational status of some of the organizations erecting signage on public property is arguable.

5. Staff are receiving increased inquiries about the signage. It appears that some of the non-profit organizations that utilized temporary portable signage are exploring other options to gain the public's continued attention.

Because political events are relatively infrequent, Staff believe the status quo be maintained for political signs and that no additional procedures or guidelines be introduced for the political signs. However, Staff believe some guidelines for City approval of philanthropic signage should be determined and sanctioned by Council in order to reduce the potential of these types of signs to become a nuisance. Staff suggest that the maximum size for exemption should be reviewed to determine an appropriate size of signage that works for both the community and the non-profit agency, and that provisions be examined to guard against crowding of these signs. Furthermore some clarification is required to ensure the signage is not inappropriately utilized.

The guidelines for approval could include the following:

1. designating the most popular locations for these signs as civic event signage areas;
2. determine the maximum number of signs allowed to be occupying designated areas in the City at any one time by any one group;
3. determine the maximum number of signs allowed in any one designated area;
4. determine the maximum size of the signs;
5. determine whether a corporate logo or advertisement for a sponsor is allowed on the signage, and, if so, guidelines for their inclusion;
6. determine what constitutes a civic, philanthropic, educational or religious organization and an appropriate drive or event for such signage; and,
7. report on *Community Charter* implications in preparing the guidelines.

Because there is already a process outlined in the Traffic and Highways Bylaw that contemplates City approval for signage on road right of way, Staff believe that guidelines could be developed with minimal bylaw amendments.

Accordingly, Staff seek Council direction to proceed with the preparation of suggested guidelines and bylaw amendments for approval of signage noted above.

Recommendation: That the Planning, Environment and Development Standing Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to prepare guidelines for City approval of Permit Exempt temporary signs for civic, philanthropic, educational or religious events and drives erected on public property.

It was moved and seconded that the report be received for information. The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillor Sherry

3. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS:

- (a) Report from Mr. P. Thorkelsson, Manager, Building Inspection, re: Building and Development Information On-Line.
- (b) Report from Mr. A. Tucker, Manager, Community Planning, re: Pesticide Use by the City of Nanaimo.

It was moved and seconded that the Information Only items be received.
The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:30 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

SENIOR MANAGER,
CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION