

CITY OF VANCOUVER



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POLICY REPORT URBAN STRUCTURE

Report Date: February 28, 2008
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Meeting Date: March 11, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Planning in Consultation with Managing Director of Cultural Services and Director of Legal Services

SUBJECT: 1181 Seymour Street - Sign By-law Amendment

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Director of Planning be instructed to make application to amend the Sign By-law for 1181 Seymour Street and the application be referred to Public Hearing together with:

- i. draft Sign By-law amendments generally as contained in Appendix A;
and
- ii. the recommendation of the Director of Planning to approve, subject to the conditions contained in Appendix B.

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary by-law, generally in accordance with Appendix A, for consideration at the Public Hearing.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

The Sign By-law regulates the number, type, form, appearance and location of signs according to districts and uses. It applies to all signs other than those on streets, lanes or public parks.

The intent of the Sign By-law is to permit signage which provides information that identifies and locates rather than advertises.

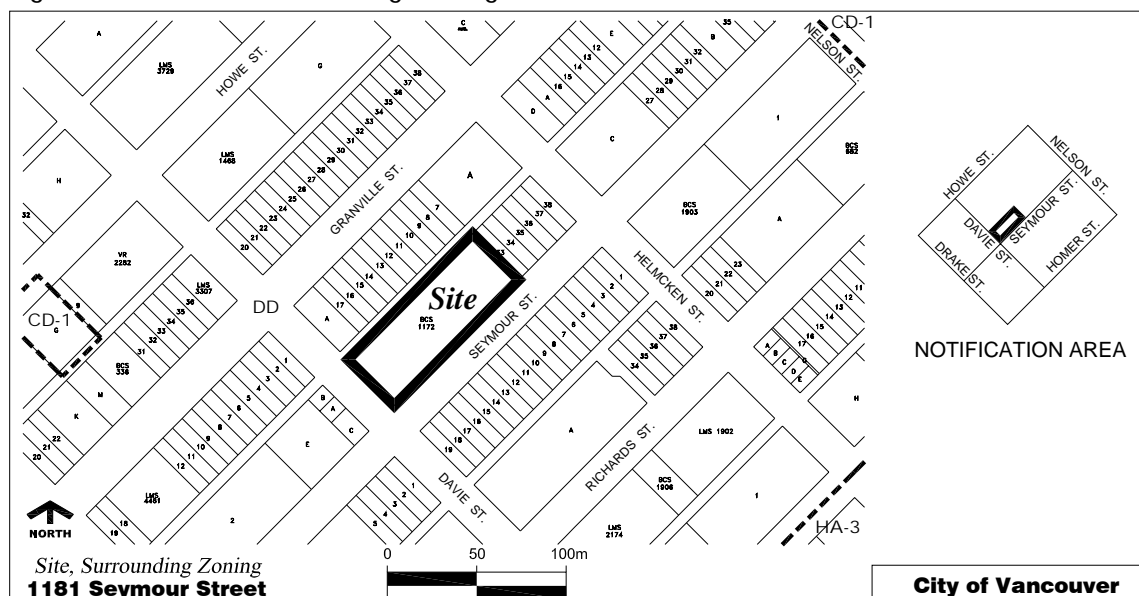
Third party advertising (sign content which directs attention to products or services provided which are not the principal products or services provided on the site at which the sign is located) is not permitted on projecting signs.

In 2006 Council approved the Naming Rights Policy for Civic Community Facilities which includes guidelines and a decision-making framework to consider naming requests for City owned buildings and facilities. The policy includes a provision requiring each naming proposal to apply for a Sign By-law amendment to be considered at Public Hearing.

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

The proposed amendment to the Sign By-law would, if approved, permit a projecting sign with third party advertising at 1181 Seymour (see Figure 1). The amendment is required to allow recognition of the corporate donor which would otherwise be considered third party advertising and therefore not permitted in the Sign By-law. The application has been reviewed and is consistent with Council's Naming Rights Policy. Therefore, the Director of Planning recommends the proposed amendment be referred to Public Hearing and approved.

Figure 1. Site and Surrounding Zoning



DISCUSSION

The Vancouver International Film centre (VIFC) presently has three signs at this location:

- a) individual letters located at the edge of the glazed canopy with copy reading "Vancouver International Film Centre";
- b) an electronic message board above the main entrance with changing information on events including dates and times; and
- c) a sign in the ground floor window at the main entrance "VanCity Theatre".

The first two signs have approved permits, while the third was installed without permit to recognize VanCity as a sponsor until such time as a more permanent sign (the subject of this application) could be considered. The existing window sign will be required to be removed as a condition of approval of the proposed sign.

The proposed projecting sign identifies the "VanCity Theatre" located at the VIFC at 1181 Seymour Street. VanCity is a sponsor of the VIFC and the VIFC leases the space from the City. The proposed signage provides third party advertising (VanCity is the third party advertiser in this case) consistent with the Naming Rights Policy for City-owned buildings. Approving the third party advertising on the projecting sign requires an amendment to the Sign By-law.

The sign (illustrated in Appendix C) would

- be attached to the existing building;
- measure 8.73 m² (94 sq. ft.) in size;
- be illuminated on the south side; and
- not be illuminated on the north side facing the adjacent residential tower.

The proposed sign complies with the size and location provisions for projecting signs in commercial areas. The sign will be fixed onto an existing structural element on the building. Staff feel the sign as proposed appears to be too heavy and the design requires revision to reduce its depth so it is not as wide as the glazed canopy below. A proposed condition of approval is further design development to address this concern.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A notification letter was sent on January 4, 2008 to 3,053 nearby property owners within the notification area (shown Figure 1 on page 2). Staff received three phone calls seeking additional information about the proposal. In addition, two emails objecting to the proposal were received. The comments noted concerns with the window signage currently in place, a concern the proposed sign would be high, large and illuminated, and a concern with the scale of the sign in an area that has become less commercial in nature. Staff note the proposed sign is generally consistent with the size of signs permitted and will be illuminated on the south side only. It is also being installed in a way to reduce impacts on neighbouring properties. Finally, the existing window sign will be removed as a condition of the new sign being approved.

One email in support was also received noting the importance of recognizing the donor and the writer felt the sign would enhance the area.

CONCLUSION

A proposal by the Vancouver International Film Centre to install a projecting sign with third party advertising at 1181 Seymour Street is consistent with the City's Naming Rights Policy and generally meets the provisions of the Sign By-law. This report recommends that the Sign By-law amendments described in Appendix A be referred to Public Hearing and approved subject to meeting the conditions in Appendix B.

* * * * *

DRAFT Sign By-law Amendments

Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

1181 Seymour Street

Draft for public hearing

BY-LAW NO. _____

A By-law to amend Sign By-law No. 6510

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. In Section 1.0 of Schedule B to the Sign By-law, Council:
 - (a) strikes out "and" from the end of subsection (k);
 - (b) strikes out the period from the end of subsection (l), and substitutes "; and"; and
 - (c) after subsection (l), adds:
 - "(m) Projecting Sign at 1181 Seymour Street to which section 11.6 does not apply."
2. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2008

Mayor

City Clerk

1181 Seymour Street

PROPOSED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Note: These are draft conditions which are subject to change and refinement by staff prior to the finalization of the agenda for the public hearing to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services.

1. THAT the existing sign in the ground floor window be removed when the projecting sign is installed.
2. THAT the design of the proposed sign be revised to reduce its depth so that it is not as wide as the glazed canopy below.

Illustration of Proposed Sign



Illustration of Proposed Sign

