



RESOLUTION OF COUNCIL MEETING NO. 5 DATED MARCH 20, 2012

MOTIONS

(1) ILLEGAL SIGNS ON MUNICIPAL BOULEVARDS (2.16)

Moved by Councillor Howard Shore

Seconded by Councillor Logan Kanapathi

Whereas the proliferation of illegal signs littering municipal boulevards are a genuine public safety concern causing sight distance problems, especially at intersections blocking the view of motorists and pedestrians; and,

Whereas illegal signs are an eyesore that end up on city streets, in gutters and distract drivers creating an issue of health and safety; and,

Whereas illegal signs create the same negative perception of in a community as graffiti or other forms of vandalism and, in fact, illegal signs adhered to municipal property such as Stop signs, traffic signal poles and hydro poles constitute vandalism; and,

Whereas illegal signage can impact property values for property owners, and drain taxpayer resources for their removal; and,

Whereas illegally placed signs are contrary to character the Town of Markham wishes to portray as a clean and sustainable community; and,

Whereas illegal signs are a blight on the landscape; and,

Whereas the Town of Markham wishes to encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication; and,

Whereas the Town of Markham believes in enhancing the appearance of our municipal roads and boulevards; and,

Whereas the Town of Markham wishes to minimize clutter by limiting the size and number of signs; and,

Whereas the Town of Markham wishes to improve pedestrian and traffic safety; and,

Whereas the Town of Markham wishes to ensure the fair and consistent enforcement of sign regulations; and,

Whereas the Town of Markham wishes to address issues of sign maintenance, repair, replacement and removal;

Now therefore be it resolved:

- 1) That Council request the Town Clerk to report to General Committee, no later than September, 2012 on:
 - a) An overview of Sign By-law regulations pertaining to municipal property and municipal right of ways (boulevards) including information on the current limitations and restrictions on enforcement;
 - b) Amendments to the Sign By-law to permit limited commercial signage, including real estate signage, and determine the maximum numbers and specific locations thereto, allowing the Town to prosecute business and persons placing signs exceeding the prescribed By-law limits;
 - d) A recommendation on an application to the Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice for increased Set Fines as a deterrent to contravening the Sign By-law;
 - e) The process and any recommendations on the recovery of fines and on the costs incurred removing illegal signs by adding the costs to the tax rolls for Markham based offenders and on the possible methods of recoveries for non Markham based offenders; and,
 - f) Any other recommendation on actions that Council can take to reduce the amount of signage being placed on municipal property and right of ways by third parties; and,
2. That the placement of certain types of signs and the methods used on municipal infrastructure, particularly utility poles (hydro, light standards, traffic signals) and traffic signage, shall be considered as being “damaging, injuring, or defacing” as prohibited in By-laws and prosecuted according; and,
3. That Council reaffirm its commitment to the beautification of its public realm streetscape and accordingly that, in principle, commercial signage on municipal boulevards is inconsistent with Markham’s Greenprint and to be discouraged; and further,
4. That staff be directed to prepare an information memo for a future General Committee meeting outlining: 1) Legislative Services planned summer Sign By-law Enforcement Program; and 2) potential enhancements to the Program (including costs for additional resources) to ensure increased enforcement of the Town’s Sign By-law regulations.

CARRIED