

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: July 11, 2022
To: Planning and Heritage Committee
From: Kelton Frey - Municipal Law Enforcement Officer
Report #: PLA22-027
Attachments: Sign Permit Application Drawings; Letter Correspondence 35 Waterloo Street.

Title: Proposed Exemption from Sign By-law 159-2004, 35 Waterloo Street North

Objective: To consider an exemption to the City of Stratford's Sign By-law 159-2004 at 35 Waterloo Street North.

Background: Staff were contacted by the owners of 35 Waterloo Street North regarding installing signage on the fence at the same property. The variance application request is to allow five additional permanent sign frames to be placed on the fence facing Waterloo Street North, Elizabeth Street, and William Street. Under Sign By-law 159-2004, these signs are classified as ground signs. All ground signs measuring over 1.6 m in height above grade need to be signed and sealed by a Professional Engineer registered to practice in Ontario. If the signs are approved, drawings will be requested that are stamped by an engineer. Such drawings have not been submitted to date.

Through the site plan and surveys provided to staff, it has been determined that the fence currently installed at 35 Waterloo Street North is on City property. The fence requires an encroachment agreement with the City or the removal and re-installation of the fence on the applicant's property. The applicants have applied for an encroachment, and the application is with the City Clerks Office. The encroachment application is being held until the outcome of this variance is established to determine the extent of the encroachment.

This variance is to allow five new ground (fence) signs on a residential property. In the R2(1)-15 residential zone where this property is located, only an address ground sign is permitted. There is currently one address ground sign already erected on the property.

In 2012 a Variance application was received to add area to the existing ground sign on the property. Minutes from 2012 indicate that Heritage Stratford at the time raised concerns about the proposed signs and that discussion focused on concerns the proposed size and the placement of the sign. The final outcome was a sign that did not

change in size, but permitted the tenants names to be included in the middle of the sign.

With the current proposal, all but one of the proposed signs will be encroaching on City property per the site plan and survey provided by the applicant (attached).

Section 25.0 (ii) of the Sign By-law indicates that neither the maintenance and repair of signs or advertising devices, nor a change in the message displayed, shall be deemed to constitute an alteration. No new permits would be needed when the applicant decides to change the messages of the signs once approved by the City.

An analysis of the sight lines was conducted, and the following pictures / renderings were made by the applicant.





Staff prepared report PLA22-015 and presented at the Planning and Heritage Sub-Committee meeting on May, 26, 2022. After discussion, Sub-committee recommended approval of the Sign Variance requested by the Applicant.

At the Planning and Heritage Committee meeting on June 13, 2022, the variance request was referred to the Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee.

The Heritage Stratford Advisory committee adopted the following recommendation after discussion:

“THAT the Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee supports the granting of an exemption from the Sign By-law 159-2004 at 35 Waterloo Street North, subject to the total number of signs approved being reduced from five (5) to three (3), with one large horizontal sign in the middle and two smaller sized ones on each end.”

Discussion at the Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee included a concern with the number and size of the signs. Key points were that the number and size of signs could take away from the heritage building and forecourt. The Advisory Committee appeared relatively supportive of the signs but would still like a reduction in the size and number of signs.

After the completion of the Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee, staff reached out to the applicant and gained the following response:

“As someone who has strongly advocated for heritage subjects, and in particular architecture in the 40 years I have lived amongst this community, I am deeply appreciative that there is a Heritage Advisory Committee and all who continue to serve on it.

However, given that it is Council where the final decision will lie, I would like to press on with requesting a variance for the 5 signs as initially requested for the reasons set out in my April 7, 2022, letter to Ms. Bridge. It is possible that the Heritage Advisory Committee may not be fully aware of the strategic thinking behind the approach to signage here.

In the interests of and out of respect for everyone’s time, should it be that Council concurs with the position of the Heritage Advisory Committee in reducing the number of signs from five to three, I would then kindly request that the large sign be positioned at the corner of William and Mornington, which has stronger visibility.”

Analysis: Although the signs do not appear to affect the sight lines at the adjacent intersections, the installation of these signs would set a precedent for number and size of signage installed in a residential area. If the signs are permitted, the applicant would need to enter into an encroachment agreement for each of the signs as well as the encroachment of the fence area on municipal property.

In attempt to establish a comparable example of a similar site and location, would be the institutional building located at the southeast corner of Waterloo Street and Cobourg Avenue. These properties have similar use, are located on the same collector

road, but one is zoned Commercial (C3) and 35 Waterloo Street is zoned Residential (R2-15). If the commercial zoning were to be applied to 35 Waterloo Street, they would be permitted one sign on William Street, two signs on Waterloo Street and one sign on Elizabeth Street. Since there is an existing sign, this approach would limit what is approved to three new signs. The three new signs would need to be spaced out 25 m from one another. This would require that the small sign on William Street be located 25 m away from the existing (corner) sign. The large horizontal sign would need to be located 25 m away from the existing (corner) ground sign. The third sign would need to be located on Elizabeth Street and be at least 25 m away from the large horizontal sign proposed for Waterloo Street.

The applicant also enquired about artwork attached to the fence. In accordance with the Sign By-law, the artwork would not be considered a sign, provided that there is no advertising of a business within the artwork.

Staff are not supportive of the exemptions and recommended against the Application, as it doesn't adhere to the Sign By-law, some signs would be located on City property and would require encroachment agreements and could influence future applications that are not in compliance with the Sign By-law. The Staff recommendation was considered at the May 26, 2022 Planning and Heritage Sub-committee meeting.

The Planning and Heritage Sub-committee recommended approval of the exemptions and the Application at that Sub-committee meeting.

At the Planning and Heritage Committee meeting on June 13, 2022, the Committee referred the matter to Heritage Stratford Advisory for their advice.

The following recommendations have been provided for Planning and Heritage Committee's further consideration at the July 11, 2022 Committee meeting:

A. Planning and Heritage Sub-committee recommendation: THAT the sign variance for five (5) additional ground signs located on municipal property adjacent to 35 Waterloo Street be approved, provided that the Applicant enters into an encroachment agreement with the City for the signs and fence installed on City property and that proper design documents are provided with the sign permit application. [May 26, 2022]

B. Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee recommendation:

THAT the sign variance for three (3) additional ground signs located on municipal property adjacent to 35 Waterloo Street North be approved subject to the following conditions:

- Approval is for one large horizontal ground sign to be located at the middle of fence line fronting Waterloo Street.

- Approval is for one small ground sign to be located at the northmost section of the fence fronting Waterloo Street.
- Approval for one small ground sign to be located on the fence within the site triangle of Waterloo Street and William Avenue.
- For approval the applicant must enter into an encroachment agreement for the signs and fence installed on City property.
- For approval the owner must provide the necessary design documentation and certifications as part of the sign application.

Financial Implications: There will be no financial implications should the staff recommendation be approved. Schedule "A" to the Sign By-law sets out fees for Sign Permits and Sign Variances. A total of \$1,968.00 in fees have been collected relating to this application, including \$1,356.00 for permits, and a variance fee of \$612.00.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities

Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships

Partnering with the community to make plans for our collective priorities in arts, culture, heritage and more. Communicating clearly with the public around our plans and activities.

Developing our Resources

Optimizing Stratford's physical assets and digital resources. Planning a sustainable future for Stratford's resources and environment.

Widening our Economic Opportunities

Strengthening Stratford's economy by developing, attracting and retaining a diversity of businesses and talent.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Equity and Local Economy

Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade.

Staff Recommendation: THAT Planning and Heritage Committee receive the subsequent report (PLA22-027) with options provided and give direction regarding the sign variance application submitted for five additional ground signs located on municipal property adjacent to 35 Waterloo Street.

Prepared by:

Recommended by:

Kelton Frey, Municipal Law Enforcement Officer
Taylor Crinklaw, Director of Infrastructure and
Development Services
Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer



Falstaff Family
Centre

Sign Permit Application Addenda

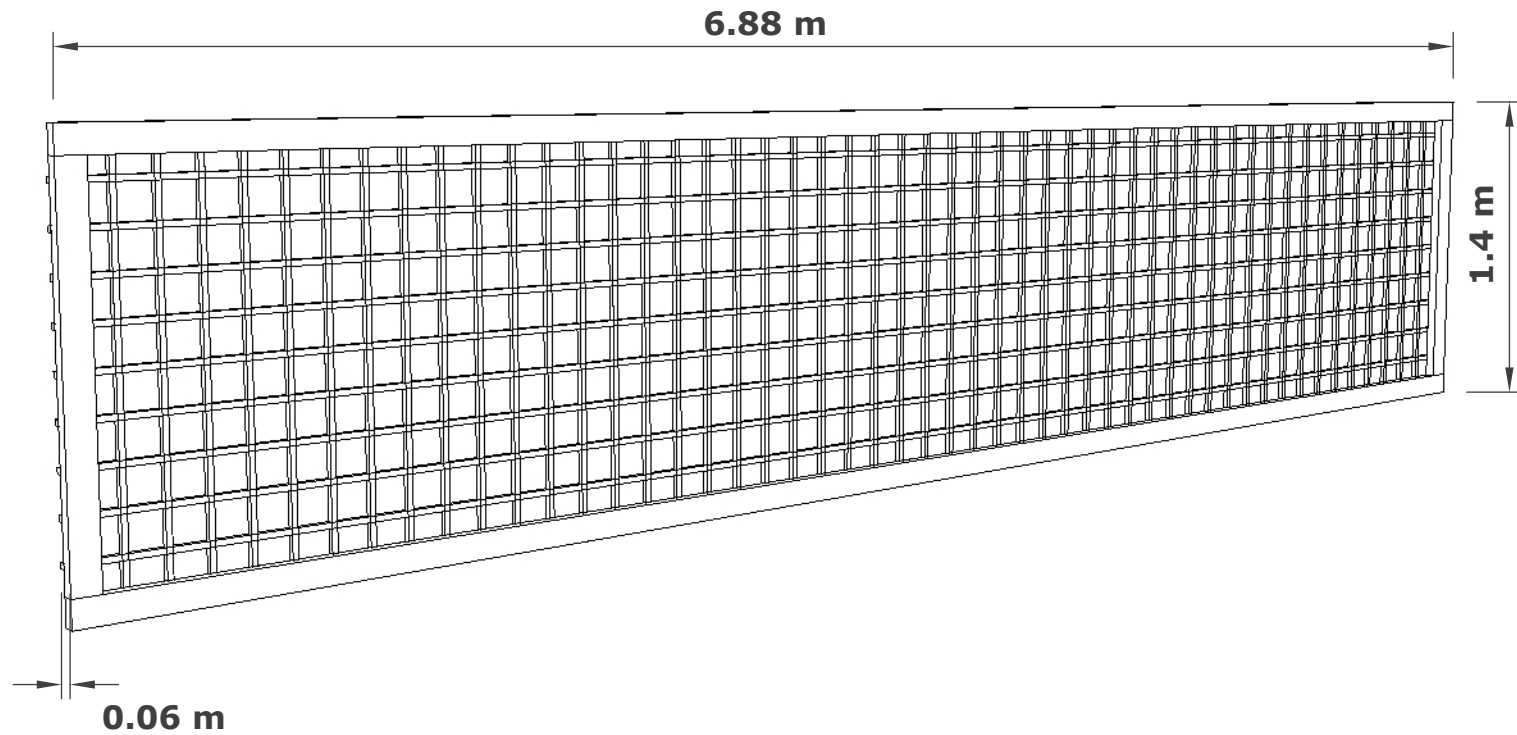
**Falstaff Family Centre
35 Waterloo Street N
Stratford, ON
N5A 5H6**

Owner: 1448456 Ontario Inc.

**Existing Use: Community Centre
Zoning: R2**

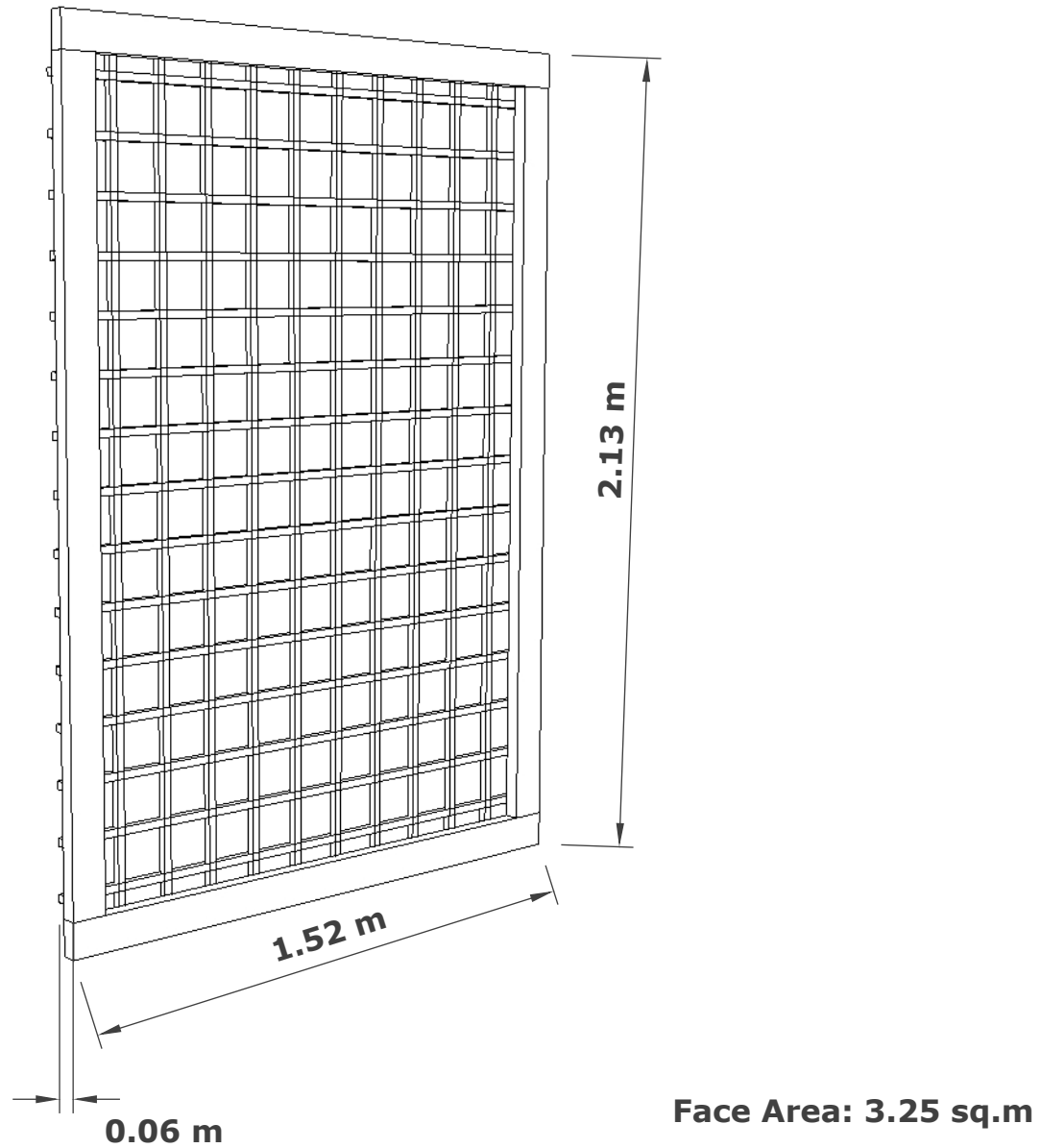
**Legal Land Description:
PLAN 68 LOT 73 TO 75 LOT 54 TO 56
PIN: 53127**

Change Copy Sign Dimensions - Horizontal Type A

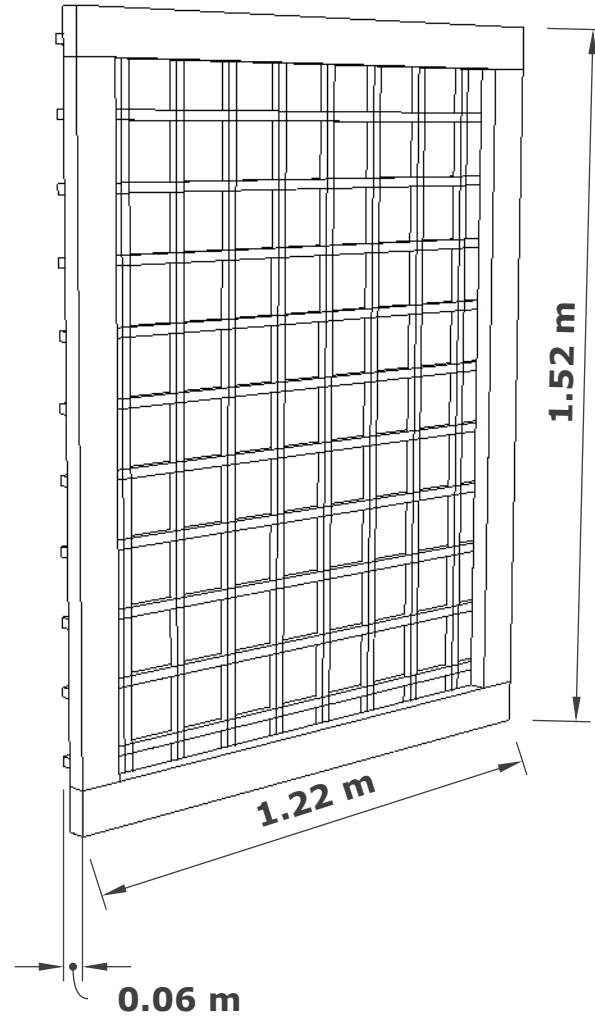


Face Area: 9.62 sq.m

Change Copy Sign Dimensions - Vertical Type B

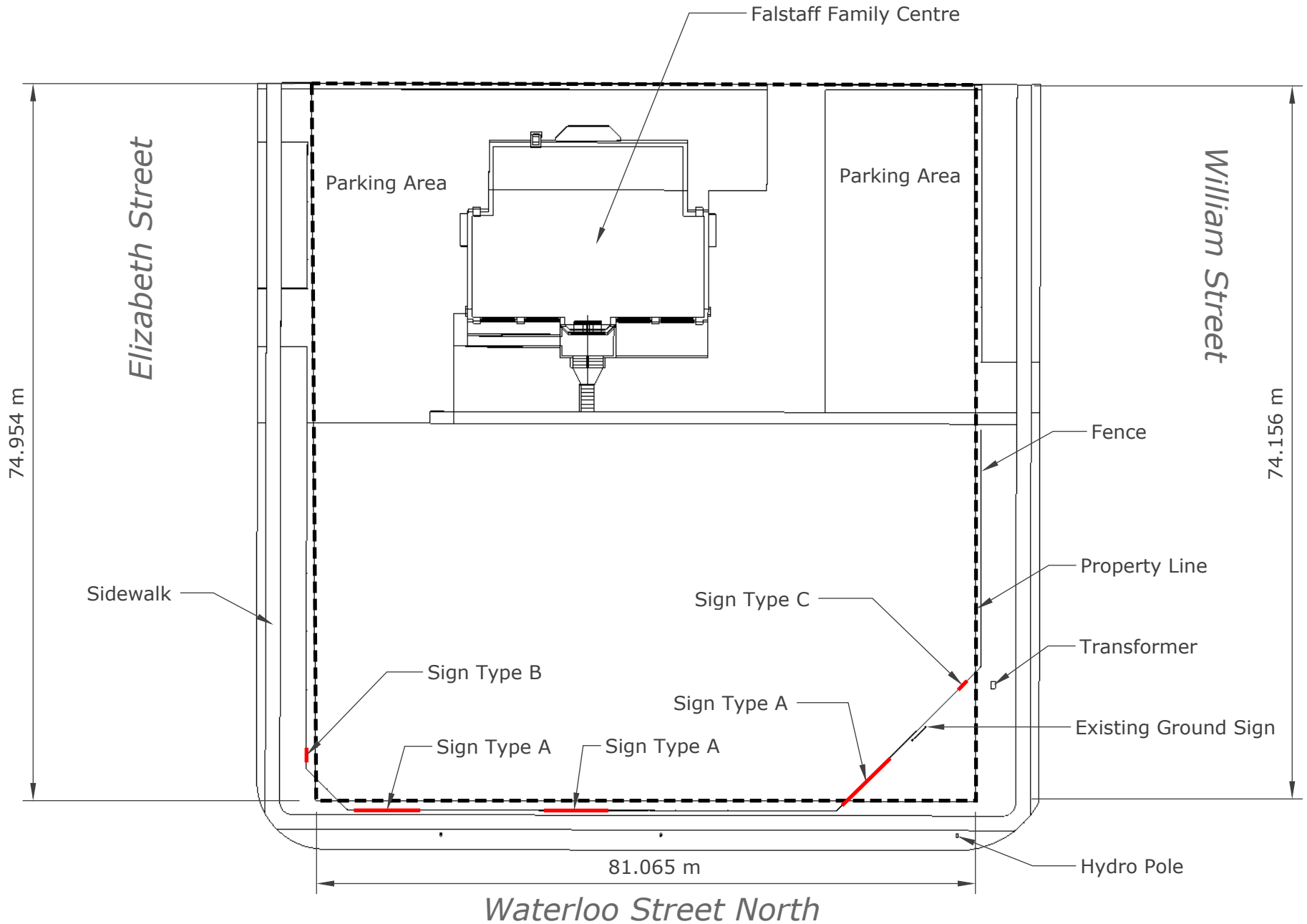


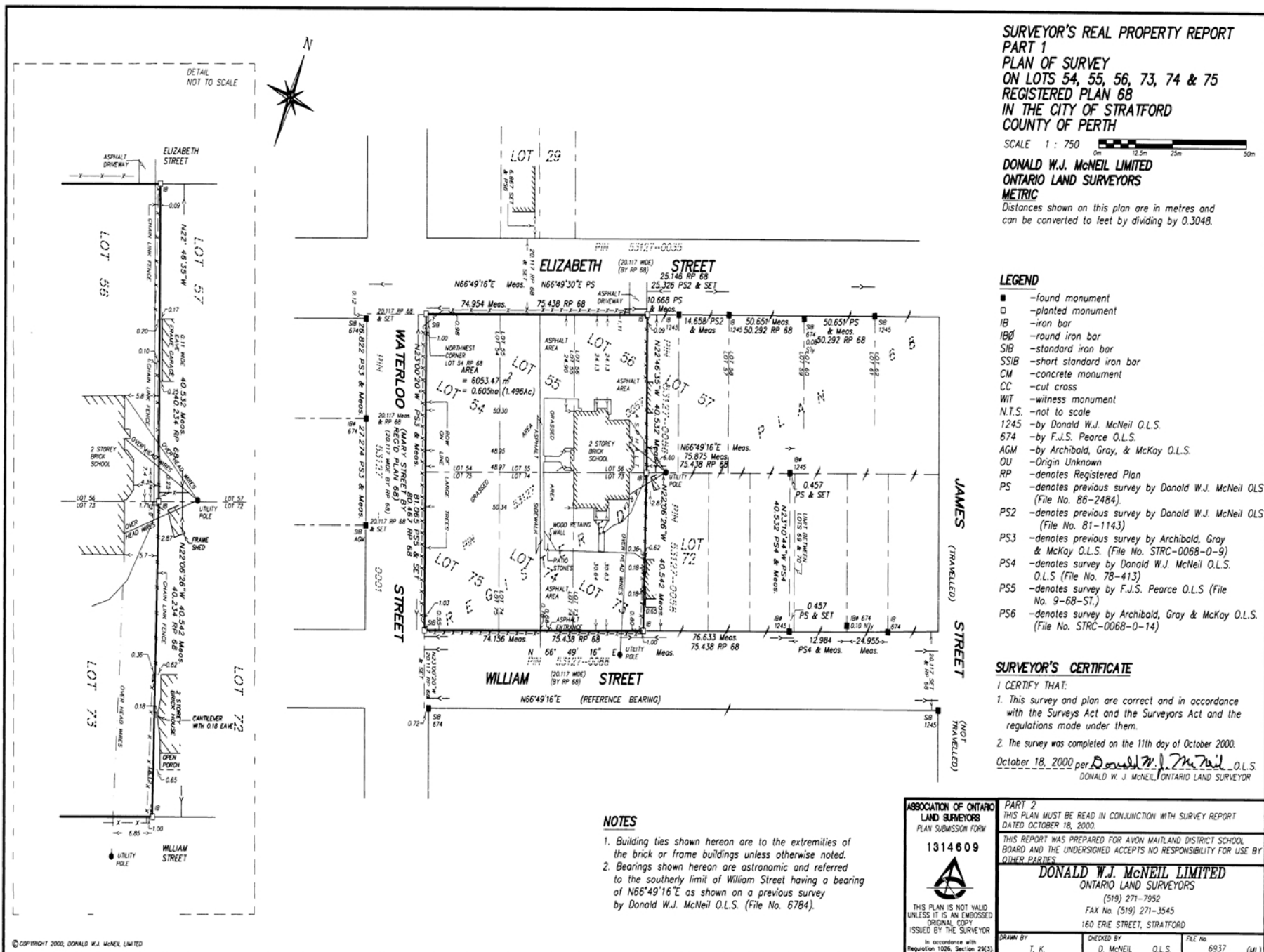
Change Copy Sign Dimensions - Vertical Type C



Face Area: 1.86 sq.m

Site Plan

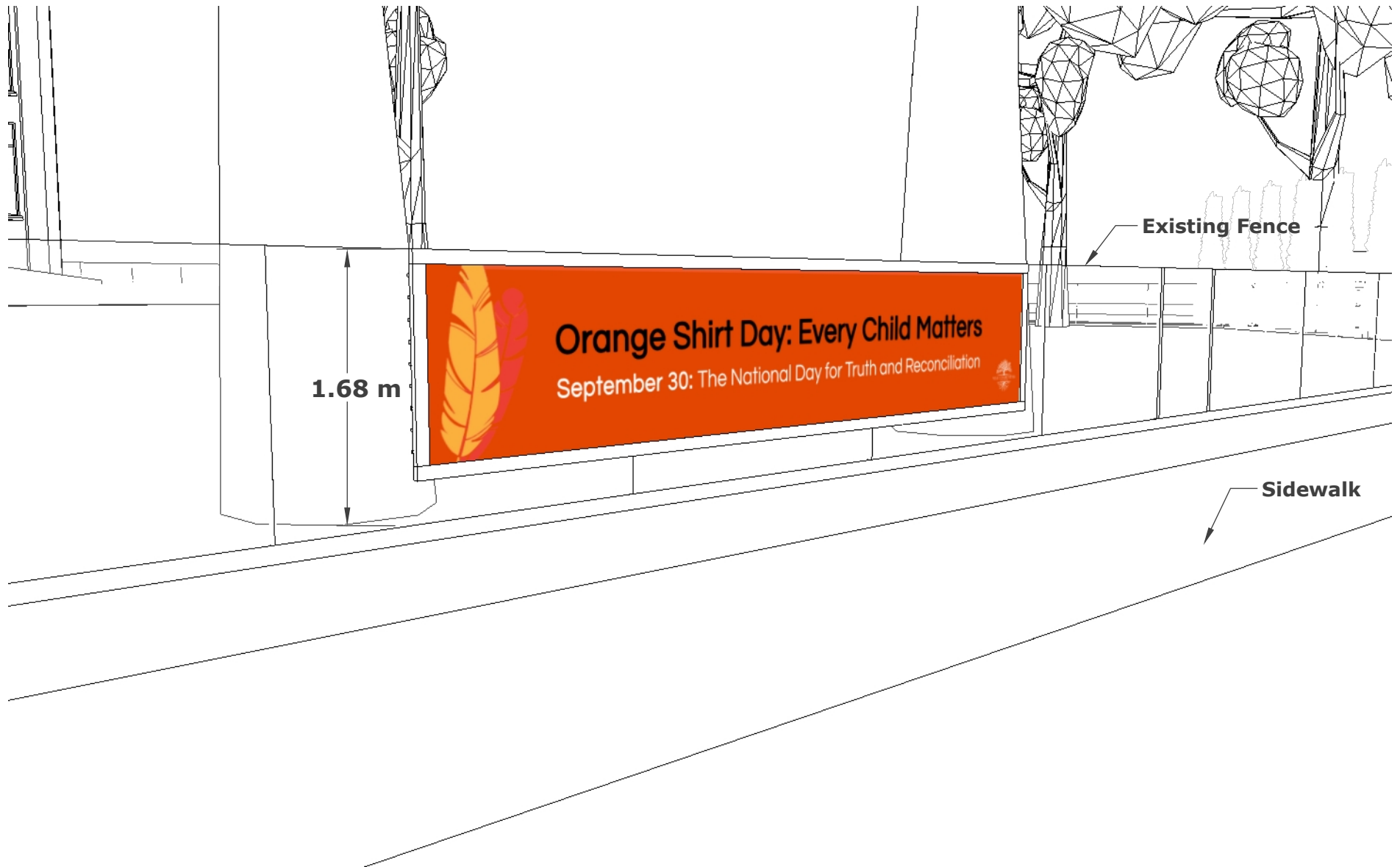




Sign Type A - Location 1 - Elevation View



Sign Type A - Location 2 - Elevation View



Sign Type A - Location 3 - Elevation View



Sign Type B - Elevation View



Sign Type C - Elevation View



Materials & Design

Frame & Lattice Backing:

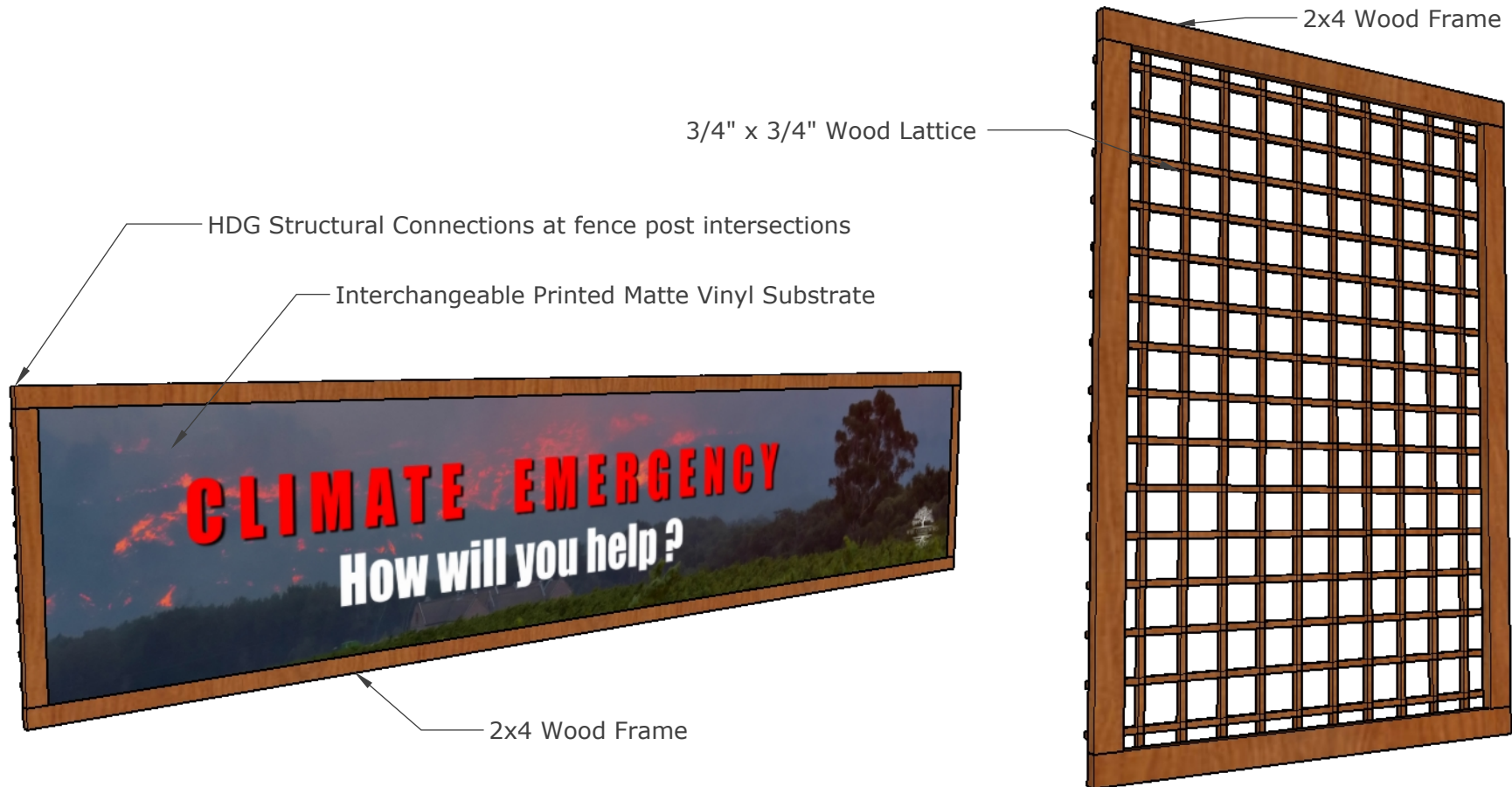
Stained Cedar

Copy Area:

Printable Matte Vinyl Substrate

Structural Connections:

**Hot Dipped Galvanized Pipe Clamp Connectors
Simpson Strong-Tie PGT or similar
Located top & bottom at fence post intersections**





Planning & Heritage Sub-Committee
City of Stratford
1 Wellington Street
Stratford, Ontario
N5A 2L2

May 24, 2022

Dear Councillors,

I am writing to follow up on our process of achieving suitable signage for the Falstaff Family Centre (FFC). Since we last communicated, we have continued to exhaustively review and discuss our signage needs with our tenants, fee-for-service providers, community groups, neighbours, city staff and some councillors, all to ensure we have taken everything and everyone's thoughts into account.

As a result of that, our approach to signage in relation to the fence, has evolved.

Who has a need for signage and what is that signage intended to accomplish?

TENANTS

The needs of tenants **EarlyON** (operated by Perth Care for Kids) and the **Stratford Middle Years School** are covered off in the main Falstaff Family Centre sign. ([Appendix A](#))

Our third tenant, the **Multicultural Association of Huron-Perth**, arrived at the centre after the main sign was already constructed. They currently reside without signage or any exterior presence. They operate from the Centre and support community gatherings indoors and on the grounds, outside of pandemic times.

FEE FOR SERVICE

Over its 22-year history, the Falstaff Family Centre has been the host to many community-oriented enterprises, including various fee-for-service activities such as yoga, music, theatre, birthday celebrations and wedding receptions.

At times, FFC also hosts ongoing performance arts festivals, such as [Spring Works](#), or as in the case of this year, the [Here for Now Theatre](#) from July 5 to Sept 11. Given that 60 per cent of their audience is from out of town, and they've previously been in a different location, the need for signage will be crucial to the success of their season.

OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

Since the establishment of the [Medicine Wheel Garden](#) in 2021, the **Indigenous Community** has an ongoing presence on the property. Some of their signage needs arise during annual events such as **National Indigenous Peoples Day** on June 21 and **The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation** on September 30. There are also additional one-off events, ceremonies or feasts which may be held on the property which do not necessarily occur on an annual basis.

Climate and environmental initiatives such as **Fridays for Future**, or **Earth Day** April 24, plus groups such as **Climate Momentum**, **Tree Trust**, or the **Upper Thames River Conservation Authority**, which will be hosting its Children's Water Festival on the property May 29, also have need for signage and visibility.

APPROACH TO SIGNAGE

TYPE OF SIGN

Throughout our consultations and review, it has become clear that each group using the Centre has different signage needs, which would also vary in size and display duration. We have also identified there would be multiple instances over the course of a year when more than one sign is needed at the same time.

In reviewing the City's sign by-law, we felt the category of signage which would best fit our needs is a [change copy sign](#), which would serve to accommodate the changing stream of events at the Centre. Additionally, given the number of events the Centre hosts over the course of a year, it would be unduly onerous and costly for all concerned to have to apply for temporary permits for each sign and event.

Given that we do not want to implement an electric change copy sign such as found at St James Church, our intention is to specifically identify those locations along the existing fence where we

could imagine signs to be and mount a wooden garden lattice framework to the fence, on which the signs could be affixed and changed as necessary. ([Appendix B](#))

With all of this in mind, we have identified five proposed locations to be comprised of three different sizes of change copy sign. The first three would be horizontal in nature (measuring 6.9m wide by 1.4m tall) and be located along Waterloo Street, with one additional vertical sign on the Waterloo-Elizabeth corner (1.5m wide by 2.1m tall) and one smaller vertical sign on the Waterloo-William corner (1.2m wide by 1.5m tall). ([Appendix C](#))

ENCROACHMENT

The existing chain link fence encircling the Centre's grounds predates the current owner and the actual erection date is unknown. The property survey ([Appendix D](#)), shows that sections of the existing fence, along with two of the proposed sign locations lie on municipal property adjacent to the subject property, and within the 30m arterial roadway allowance setback per the City's Official Plan (2019). We would be amenable to entering into an encroachment agreement with the City, should Council approve the variance request, and an application for encroachment has been included in this submission.

CONCURRENT SIGNS

At times, there may be a need for more than one sign to be displayed. For example, on June 21, 2022 there could be a sign supporting **National Indigenous Peoples Day** (which may be erected a week in advance on June 14), while three signs could be put in place on June 20 promoting the **Here for Now Theatre's** upcoming season starting July 5. ([Appendix E](#))

DURATION OF SIGNS

Our overall view is to have signage up no longer than necessary and there will be periods of time when there would be no signage required. We realize this is subjective, but from our own experience and through the feedback we've received, it's apparent that a certain size and duration of signage is necessary to launch a project or event. Once launched and ongoing, less prominence is needed.

For example, we can envision a larger sign erected on June 14, two to three weeks prior to **Here for Now Theatre's** start date July 5, along with one smaller vertical sign on each end of the property to ensure any attendees identify the theatre event with the Centre. Once Here for Now's season gets launched, the larger sign would come down, leaving only the two smaller panels on Elizabeth and William streets to continue to identify the venue for theatre patrons.

NATURE OF SIGNS

As previously noted, each sign frame would be constructed of a wooden frame with lattice backing to support a printable matte substrate for the copy portion. The design sizes are intended to be legible to both pedestrians and motorists, and the frame and copy design would allow these signs to be operationally convenient and adaptable to our ongoing needs. The lattice work and frame design also help to reduce the overall weight of the signs, allowing the wind to pass through unobstructed and while still providing adequate connection strength and backing for the sign material. The latticework is also intended to allow empty frames to be aesthetically pleasing to the best degree possible, whenever there may be no signage present.

CONTENT OF SIGNS

The content of the signs to be affixed to the framework will predominantly be focused on civic matters and matters which are in some way connected to the Falstaff Family Centre and its mission: *“The Falstaff Family Centre is located in Stratford, Ontario focusing on the needs of families and children in Perth County. Founded in 2002, the centre is a multi-faceted and evolving facility, devoted to the principles of inclusiveness, diversity and the realization of human potential, and responsive to needs identified by the local community.”*

Signs not directly connected to the FFC (e.g. dragon boat festival or political campaigns) would not qualify.

LIVING CANVAS

When we’ve discussed the current aesthetic of the chain link fence internally and with neighbours, we’ve all agreed that it’s functional, but not inspiring. This has led us to envision the fence and all that comes with it (including the signs) as *a living canvas*.

We also researched some approaches taken in other locations and communities which relate to this concept. ([Appendix F](#))

In addition to the signage goals, we intend to populate the fence with vines (silver lace, morning glory and clematis are possibilities), along with pollinator plants and gardens at regular intervals from the inside of the property, bringing more life and bio-diversity to the site.

We also received feedback about complementary, creative opportunities with the fence. For example, **UTRCA Children’s Water Festival** may weave images of fish on the fence, similar to what has been installed at St. Aloysius school. We’re interested in exploring collaborations with Gallery Stratford, schools, and other artists in the community, in creating artistic expressions complementary to the multiple themes associated with The Falstaff Family Centre, especially and including Climate Emergency and Indigenous rights, truth and reconciliation.

Given that managing this property is not our primary focus, but rather a philanthropic contribution to the community, we realize the various plans and aspirations set out above may take a few years to implement. But we want to establish a vision as to where we are going, including the signage, and to have an understanding of how it might be integrated harmoniously into the neighbourhood and community.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSULTATION

On March 25, we hand-delivered more than 80 letters to the neighbours in closest proximity to the Centre. We invited them to attend a meeting either in person or via Zoom. Six people joined us at the Centre Wednesday, March 30. Since some were new to the neighbourhood, we provided background on The Falstaff Family Centre and presented what we've laid out in this letter and sought their feedback, which has now been incorporated into this submission. We emphasized the importance of working and existing in the community in a consultative and complementary way.

Although we would note that a permanent electric change copy sign is a permitted sign type for the property under the current sign bylaw, in consultation with the neighbours, it was jointly felt that this was not going to be in keeping with the heritage nature of the property; could be too distracting for drivers and would not, in itself, accomplish what the proposed signage might do.

We have recognized the importance of community communication on common concerns which have a visible presence and awareness-building capability.

SUMMARY

Although privately owned, in 2000 The Falstaff Family Centre set out its mission to be a community-orientated property in service to the families of Stratford and Perth County. Since then it has welcomed literally thousands of people, children and families.

Over the years we have continued to welcome our neighbours and the community to enjoy the grounds for dog walking, ice skating, tobogganing and general recreation and we look forward to continuing to support the many and varied needs of the community in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

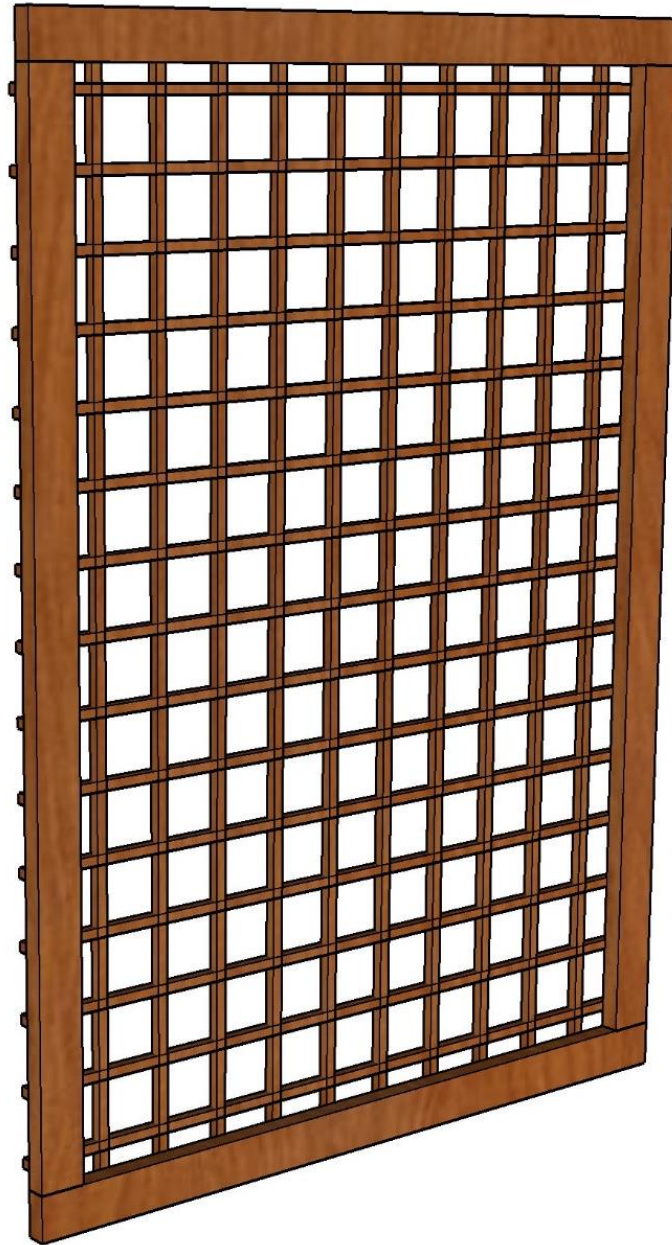
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. McKennitt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Loreena McKennitt
Director, Falstaff Family Centre

Appendix A – Existing Address Sign



Appendix B – Wooden Lattice Framework



Appendix C – Proposed Locations & Sizes

Change Copy Sign Dimensions - Horizontal Type A

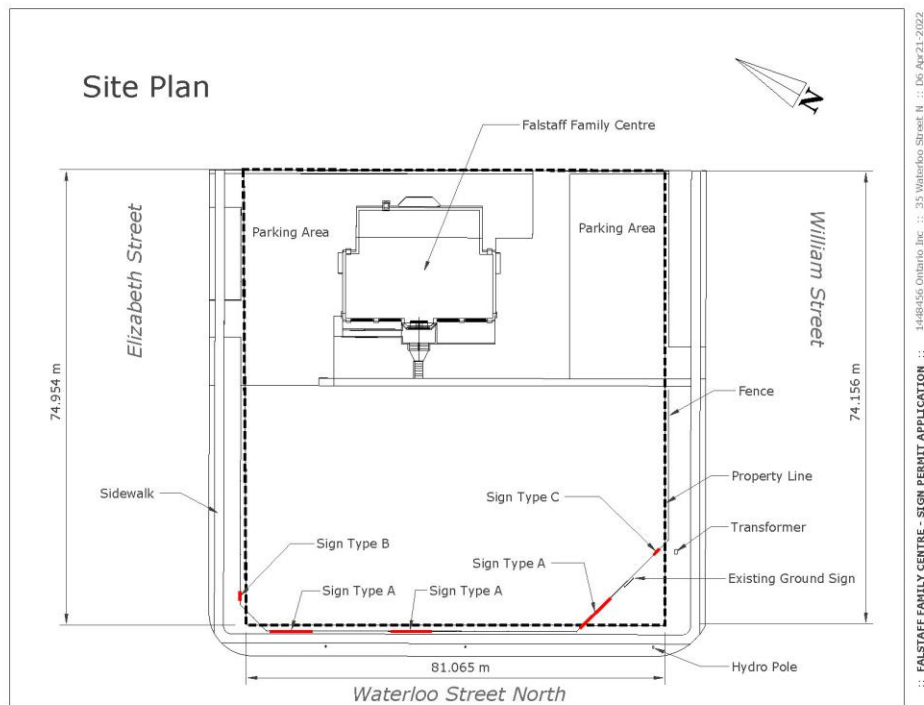
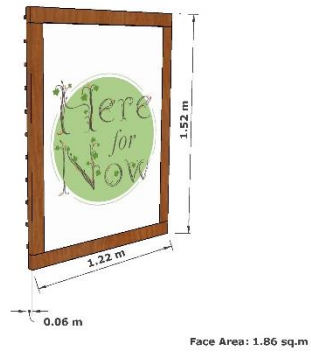


Face Area: 9.62 sq.m

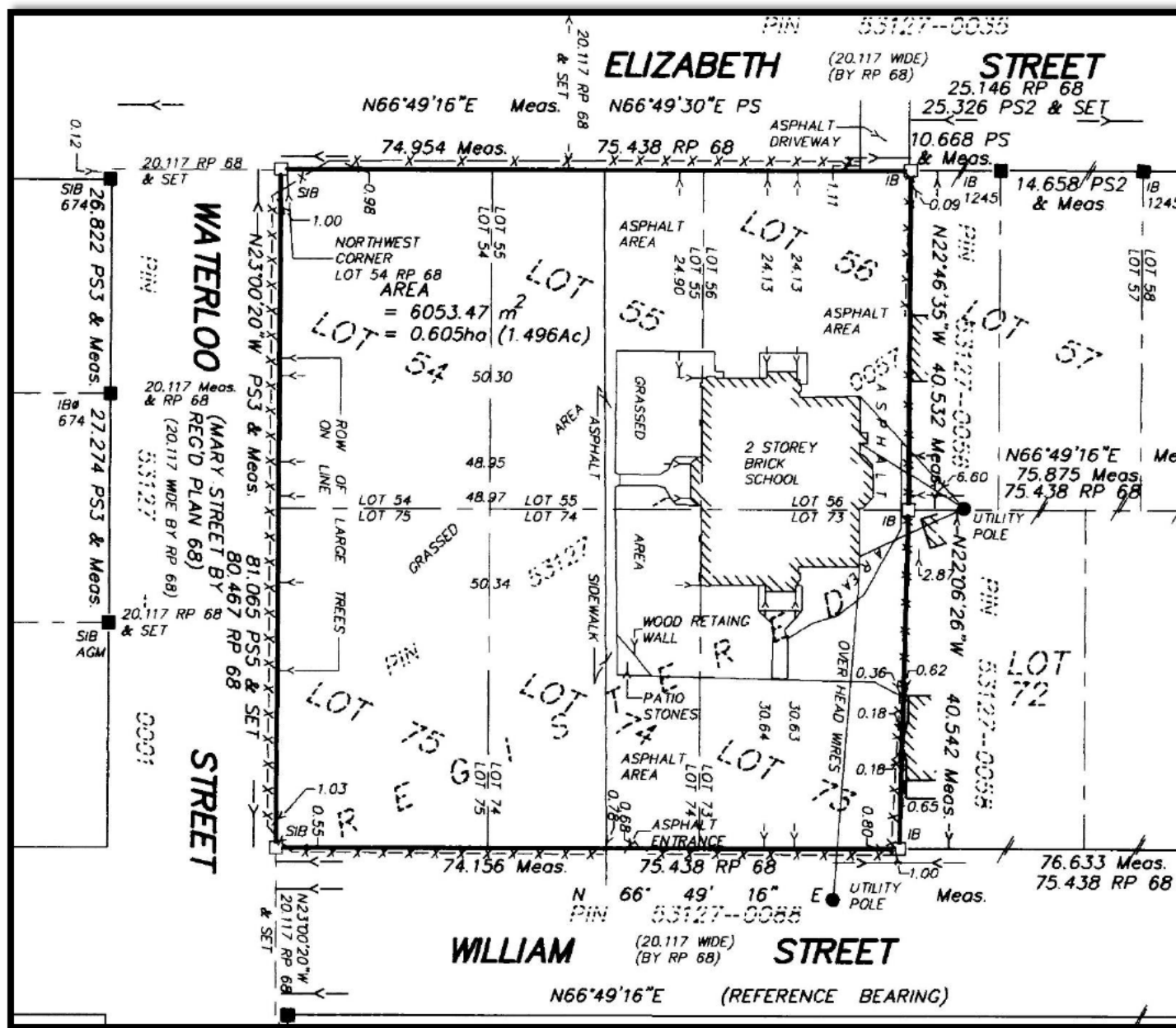
Change Copy Sign Dimensions - Vertical Type B



Change Copy Sign Dimensions - Vertical Type C



Appendix D - Property Survey



Appendix E – Concurrent Sign Example



Appendix F – Fence Artwork Examples





Fiona Mongillo, Artistic Director
Here For Now Theatre
[REDACTED] Stratford, ON. [REDACTED]
info@herefornowtheatre.com

Alyssa Bridge
Manager of Planning
City of Stratford
82 Erie Street, 2nd Floor
Stratford, ON N5A 2M4

April 5th, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support of the Falstaff Family Centre's (FFC) application for a signage variance. The FFC, which is centrally located, not only supports families and children but also hosts diverse events that contribute to the knowledge, involvement and well-being of the general community.

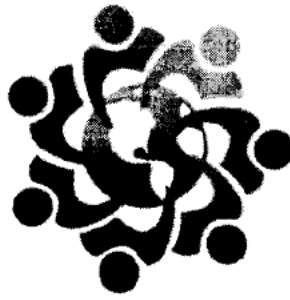
The FFC is generously hosting Here For Now Theatre Company's 2022 season, which is our first full season indoors. Our last two outdoor seasons were hosted at the Bruce Hotel, and as such many of our patrons associate our company with the hotel. It is imperative that we have visible signage in order to re-establish ourselves at the FFC and feel that appropriate signage will be essential to reaching ticket sale targets.

Here For Now Theatre Company provides an 'off-Broadway' counterpart to the Stratford Festival, which contributes to the cultural ethos of our city. We have been successful in drawing substantial tourism to Stratford as well as offering 100+ contracts to local artists over these last two difficult years. The upcoming season stands to be our biggest yet - our growing reputation has even secured us upcoming reviews in the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail*. If we are able to prove our viability this season, whilst the Stratford Festival is operating at full capacity, we will be able to make more permanent plans for the years to come and Stratford will have a secondary full-scale professional theatre company providing a totally different kind of theatre experience for locals and tourists alike. Signage that establishes us at the FFC will be essential to our success this season, and therefore to the longevity of the company.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my letter. Please feel free to contact me anytime if further information is required.

Warmly,

Fiona Mongillo,
Artistic Director of Here For Now Theatre Company



**Multicultural
Association
Perth-Huron**

April 2, 2022

Mr. Mark McCauley
Falstaff Centre
35 Waterloo St N
Stratford, ON
N5A 6H6

Dear Mark:

Re: Signage Variance

I understand that Loreena McKennitt will be applying for a signage variance to allow her to post signs on the fence surrounding her property at 35 Waterloo Street North. These signs will be used to promote community activities on her property, including those of the Multicultural Association Perth-Huron.

Her dedication to and involvement in this community certainly warrants a variance.

Sincerely,

Stephen Landers
Per Multicultural Association Perth-Huron

Bill James-Abra, Coordinator
Climate Momentum
c/o [REDACTED]
Stratford, ON [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Alyssa Bridge
Manager of Planning
City of Stratford
82 Erie Street, 2nd Floor
Stratford, ON
N5A 2M4

Tuesday April 5, 2022

Dear Ms. Bridge,

I'm writing in support the Falstaff Family Centre's application for a signage variance.

Loreena McKennitt and the Falstaff Family Centre have been great supporters of Climate Momentum in the past, offering equipment and expertise, as well as their enthusiasm and support for our events and initiatives. We've talked together about their vision for using the fence at the Centre as a means for engaging the community and how it could support community-based organizations like Climate Momentum and others. And we think that, more than a simply allowing a sign on the fence, this is an opportunity for engagement and for community building, as well as valuable support for a community organization like ours.

To give you a little background, Climate Momentum is a volunteer organization, community-based, focused on climate action in Stratford and Perth County. We work to support individuals in areas of meaningful climate action, such as in transportation, home energy use, waste reduction, and natural habitat. And we advocate for municipal and the County governments to take a leading role in supporting climate action.

The signage variance that FFC is applying for helps a community organization like Climate Momentum to reach out to our community. For example, a banner promoting our Earth Day Street Party this month would give us a way to promote a key event in our calendar at a cost that we can afford, and in a collaborative way that reflects the values we want to have as an organization. We want to be able work with other organizations in Stratford, like FFC, to engage and inform our neighbours and make our community a better place to live. We hope the City can see this as an opportunity to support that work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours,

Bill James-Abra
For Climate Momentum