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# Downtown signage under review

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Downtown sign standards are being reviewed by the town to ensure they properly recognize the “unique attributes of this district,” according to a report that will come before council Tuesday night.

The sign bylaw revisions are to “reinforce the pedestrian scale of development in the downtown area; the heritage aspects of the district and the intermix between residential, commercial and institutional uses,” wrote Andrew McNeely, director of planning and building services for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

“They’re all changes based on the needs of the businesses downtown,” Anna Rose, downtown co-ordinator for the municipality, told The Sun-Tribune. “It’s so different than the western approach. Here there’s more people walking. Eye-level signage is more important.”

Some of the changes proposed include reducing the size of ground signs on commercial and institutionally-zoned land by about 22 per cent and allowing them to be closer to the road.

The draft bylaw also proposes ground signs be allowed for home-based businesses, home

occupations, home industries and bed and breakfast establishments within the downtown. The current bylaw does not provide for these businesses, according to the report.


Revisions are also being proposed to accommodate more signage on buildings with two street fronts. However, the size or massing of wall and fascia signs on commercial or institutional buildings, as a ratio of the building frontage, are not proposed to change.

Strip lighting, within an architectural feature is proposed for permission, as is perpendicular signage to eligible buildings.

Sandwich boards, which have historically been located on town sidewalks, will continue to be allowed but their surface area is proposed to be reduced and the height be more conducive to the area.

Proposed prohibited signs include ones that are portable/mobile and inflatable, as are billboards, roof and electronic message centre signs because “these forms of signage would be out of character for the downtown area,” Mr. McNeely wrote.

An open house/information meeting was held Wednesday night to solicit comments from the public. About seven business owners attended the meeting, according to Ms Rose.



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