



Alternative formats and communication supports available upon request. Please contact accessibility@brantford.ca or 519-759-4150 for assistance.

Date January 14, 2021 **Report No.** 2021-74

To Chair and Members
City of Brantford Committee of Adjustment

From Alexandra Mathers
Development Planner

1.0 Type of Report

Committee of Adjustment Decision Regarding Application for Minor Variance

2.0 Topic

APPLICATION NO. A07/2021

APPLICANT/OWNER Wilfrid Laurier University

LOCATION 73 George Street

3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Application A07/2021 seeking relief from Schedule 'B' Section 2.7 – Guidelines – Heritage Buildings, of Chapter 478 of the City of Brantford Municipal Code to permit an internally illuminated sign, whereas internally illuminated signs, back-lit signs and electronic messaging centres are not permitted, BE APPROVED; and
- B. THAT the reason(s) for approval are as follows: the proposed variance is in keeping with the general intent of the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and Chapter 478 of the City of Brantford Municipal Code, the relief requesting is considered minor in nature and is desirable for the appropriate development and use of the land; and

-
- C. THAT pursuant to Section 45(8) – (8.2) of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O 1990, c.P.13, the following statement SHALL BE INCLUDED in the Notice of Decision:

“Regard has been had for all written and oral submissions received from the public before the decision was made in relation to this planning matter as discussed in Section 6.2 of Report No. 2021-74.”

4.0 Purpose and Description of Application

A minor variance application has been received for the lands municipally addressed as 73 George Street. A location map is attached as **Appendix A**. The ‘Carnegie Building’ is located on the subject lands, and is now part of the Wilfrid Laurier University Downtown Brantford campus. The property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by the City of Brantford By-law 136-78 (“Designation By-law”). The applicant is proposing an internally illuminated ground sign on the southwest portion of the subject lands and is proposing to remove the existing signs from the site. **Appendix B** provides a concept site plan and elevations of the proposed sign. To facilitate the internally illuminated ground sign as proposed, the applicant is seeking relief from Schedule ‘B’ – Guidelines – Heritage Buildings, Section 2.7 to permit an internally illuminated ground sign, whereas internally illuminated signs are not permitted on heritage designated properties.

5.0 Site Features

The subject lands are located on the east side of George Street, south of Wellington Street. The ‘Carnegie Building’ occupies the site, which was formerly the City’s Public Library. The property is designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by the City of Brantford By-law 136-78 (“Designation By-law”), and is surrounded by, but not included in, the Victoria Park Square Conservation District. The subject lands are now part of the Wilfrid Laurier University Downtown Brantford campus. Directly to the west is Victoria Park Square and the subject lands are surrounded by commercial and institutional uses. Brantford City Hall is located to north of the subject lands at the northeast corner of George Street and Wellington Street. An aerial photo, and site photographs are attached as **Appendices C** and **D**.

6.0 Input from Other Sources

6.1 Technical Comments

This application was circulated to all appropriate departments and agencies. No adverse comments or objections were received from the commenting agencies. A Heritage Permit Application was received in November 2020, and the application was reviewed by the Heritage Committee on December 7, 2020 and resolved that the Heritage Permit Application shall be approved, subject to the condition that the minor variance application receives final approval from the Committee of Adjustment (File No. HA-09-20, Report No. 2020-565). Detailed comments from the Building and Engineering Departments are attached as **Appendices E and F**.

6.2 Public Response

Notice of public hearing was issued by personal mail (10 notices) and by posting a sign on-site. At the date of the preparation of this Report, no comments have been received. A plan illustrating the notification area is attached as **Appendix G**.

7.0 Planning Staff Comments and Conclusion

7.1 Provincial Policy Context

Application A07/2021 was reviewed in the context of Provincial Policy, including the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (Growth Plan). These policies set the standard to which provincial and local interests, policies and goals are implemented. The PPS outlines that Ontario's long term prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being depend on wisely managing change and promoting efficient land use and development patterns. The Growth Plan outlines the principals that provide the basis for guiding decisions in the Greater Golden Horseshoe on how land is developed, resources are managed and protected, and public dollars are invested. Planning Staff is of the opinion that the proposed minor variance application is consistent with the direction set out in the PPS and conforms to the Growth Plan.

7.2 City of Brantford Official Plan

The subject lands are designated “Core Commercial Area” in the City’s Official Plan (**Appendix H**). This designation is intended to be the primary cultural, entertainment and office commercial activity area serving the City and portions of the surrounding municipalities. It is envisaged that the Core will accommodate a wide range of uses including; business, professional and government offices; institutions and cultural attractions; education facilities; retail and services uses; hotel and convention centres; entertainment, tourism and recreational facilities and multiple unit residential dwellings. The Wilfrid Laurier University Downtown Brantford Campus is a major educational facility in the City and an important part of the downtown and its revitalization.

Section 9 of the Official Plan establishes policies regarding cultural heritage and archaeology in the City of Brantford. Section 9.1.6 states that *“The City must consult with the Brantford Heritage Committee, which is the Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) for the city, on matters relating to the heritage resources of the municipality.”* The applicant had applied for a Heritage Application File No. HA-09-20 for 73 George Street, which was subsequently supported by Planning Staff and was approved by the Brantford Heritage Committee subject to a Minor Variance application receiving final approval, as per the direction of the December 14, 2020 Heritage Committee decision. The proposed minor variance conforms with the Official Plan.

7.3 City of Brantford Zoning By-law 160-90

The subject lands are zoned “Fringe Core Commercial (C2) Zone” in Zoning By-law 160-90 (**Appendix I**). The C2 Zone permits a range of uses including commercial, institutional, entertainment and multiple dwelling unit residential uses. The existing post-secondary school use is a permitted use under the Zone. The proposed variance seeks relief from Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code for a sign variance, and no relief is being sought from Zoning By-law 160-90. The existing building meets all other regulations under of the Zoning By-law.

7.4 Chapter 478 of the City of Brantford Municipal Code

The proposed internally illuminated ground sign is subject to Schedule ‘B’ – Guidelines – Heritage Buildings of Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code.

The minor variance seeks relief from Section 2.7 of Schedule 'B' of Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code, in order to permit an internally illuminated sign, whereas internally illuminated signs are not permitted for heritage designated properties. The Carnegie Building is an individually heritage designated building under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, and is not within the Victoria Park Square Heritage Conservation District. As the subject property is not included in the Victoria Park Square Heritage Conservation District, Section 4.1 of Schedule B of Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code does not apply. The applicant will be removing the other existing signs on the site which will be required prior to the sign permit being issued. The proposed sign meets all other requirements of Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code.

7.5 Planning Analysis

When evaluating the merits of a minor variance application, the Committee of Adjustment must be satisfied that the four tests of Section 45(1) of the *Planning Act* have been met. To be approved, a minor variance must be minor in nature, desirable for the appropriate development and use of the land, and the general intent and purpose of the Zoning By-law and Official Plan must be maintained.

The proposed internally illuminated ground sign is minor in nature and appropriate use and development of the lands as it is not expected to have an adverse impact on the heritage of the building or the surrounding Victoria Square Park Heritage Conservation District.

The intent of Schedule 'B' – Guidelines – Heritage Buildings is to encourage and permit signage that preserves and enhances the heritage character of the property, and surrounding streetscape. Signs that are simple in design, informative and harmonious with the architectural style of the street are encouraged. Section 2.7 of Schedule 'B', does not permit internally illuminated signs for heritage designated properties. The intent of this general prohibition of internally illuminated signage is to address concerns that are typically associated with modern internally illuminated "lightbox" style signage which does not reinforce a historic sense of place and can lack high-quality design.

The overall design of the proposed signage reflects the guidelines in both Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code and the Victoria Square Park Heritage District Study. Buildings within the surrounding area originate from a range in architectural style, and most are of a higher quality of design. The sense

of place is therefore not tied to one specific era of history, and can be supported by high-quality design from a range of eras, including the more contemporary design of the proposed signage. The proposed signage is contextually appropriate and assists in maintaining the heritage character of the streetscape by incorporating wood and metal, and a historical colour palette as illustrated on the proposed elevations (see **Appendix B**). The proposed concrete base matches the existing concrete finishes of 73 George Street. The proposed sign face is proposed to be aluminum and glass with the simple text of “Laurier”, the motto “Inspiring Lives” and a maple leaf logo. The proposed use of internal illumination is minimal and the proposed lighting does not flood out the sign face, and rather only emphasizes the edges of the individual letters and maple leaf logo through the glass. This achieves a similar effect to the spotlighting and gooseneck lights which are encouraged for heritage designated buildings, in this instance however, this would take away from the design of the proposed sign and the designated heritage building. The proposed signage is consistent with the guidelines in Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code and is sympathetic to the heritage character and will maintain the visibility of the Carnegie Building’s architecture and heritage. Planning Staff are of the opinion that the proposed signage is a well-designed contemporary sign that preserves the heritage character of the neighbourhood, enhances the streetscape and meets the intent of Schedule ‘B’ of Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code.

The Official Plan encourages the improvement of streetscapes and façades throughout the “Core Commercial” Area under Section 7.3.2.9 and the conservation of heritage resources where considered feasible in the “Core Commercial” Area under Section 7.3.2.10. The Official Plan states that *the City shall encourage the improvement of the streetscape and facades throughout the “Core Commercial” Area to achieve improved landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, signage and seating along streets.* Further, the Official Plan states built heritage resources designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* shall be conserved where feasible in the redevelopment of the Core Area.

Section 9 of the Official Plan establishes policies regarding cultural heritage and archaeology in the City of Brantford. Section 9.1.6 states that *“The City must consult with the Brantford Heritage Committee, which is the Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) for the city, on matters relating to the heritage resources of the municipality.”* The applicant had applied for Heritage Application (File No. HA-09-20) for 73 George Street, which

was subsequently supported by Planning Staff and was approved by the Brantford Heritage Committee subject to a minor variance application receiving final approval, as per the direction of the December 14, 2020 Heritage Committee decision. The proposed minor variance meets the intent of the Official Plan. The proposed signage is accessory to the permitted use under the C2 Zone in Zoning By-law 160-90 and meets the intent of the Zoning By-law.

7.6 Conclusion

A site visit was conducted on December 17, 2020. Upon completion of this visit and review of the applicable policies, Planning Staff are supportive of the application. The minor variance will facilitate a well-designed sign that is sympathetic to the heritage character of the subject lands and surrounding area and enhances the streetscape. For the reasons mentioned above, the minor variance satisfies the criteria of Section 45(1) of the *Planning Act*, and Staff recommend that application A06/2021 be approved.



Prepared by: Alexandra Mathers
Development Planner
Prepared on: January 8, 2021



Reviewed By: Joe Muto MCIP, RPP
Manager of Development Planning


Appendix A – Location Map

LOCATION MAP

Application: A07/2021
73 George Street

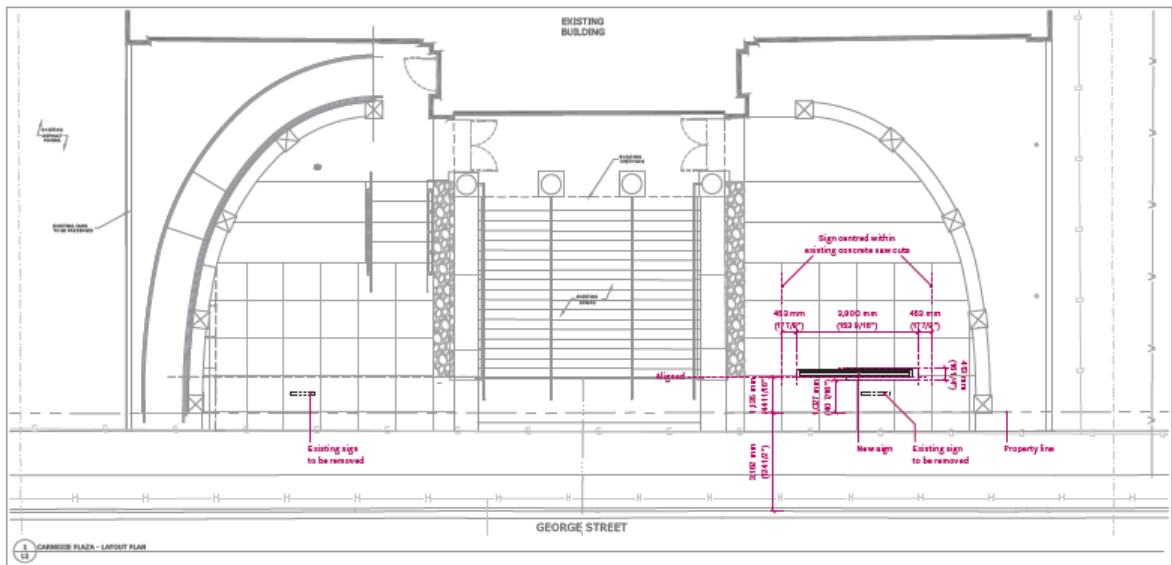


Legend

 SUBJECT LAND



Appendix B – Site Plan and proposed elevations



Wilfrid Laurier University
Carnegie Building Front Plaza
Scale 1:100

North



Appendix C – Aerial Photo

AERIAL PHOTO

Application: A07/2021
73 George Street



Legend

 Subject Land

Aerial Photo from Spring 2017



Appendix D – Site Photographs



Photo of the Carnegie Building and existing signage at 73 George Street, the propose sign is proposed to be located approximately where the existing wayfinding sign is located (existing sign is to be removed).

Appendix E – Building Department Comments



BUILDING DEPARTMENT

PRELIMINARY REPORT TO PLANNING

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MINOR VARIANCE	<input type="checkbox"/> SEVERANCE
<input type="checkbox"/> DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION	<input type="checkbox"/> ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DRAFT PLAN OF CONDOMINIUM
<input type="checkbox"/> RENTAL HOUSING PROTECTION ACT	<input type="checkbox"/> SITE PLAN CONTROL APPROVAL

APPLICATION / SUBMISSION N°.....A07-2021

SITE: 73 George Street
TO PERMIT: Various
APPLICANT: Jillian Holmes, Wilfrid Laurier University

COMMENTS:

BYLAW: 160-90 ZONE:

1. Relief is required from the following sections of Chapter 478 of the Municipal Code (sign):
 - Schedule B 2.7 to permit an internally illuminated sign, whereas internally illuminated signs are not permitted; and
2. Other existing signs must be removed prior to the installation of the new proposed sign.

Marta Schultz
Senior Plans Examiner

1/6/2021

Appendix F – Engineering Comments



CITY OF BRANTFORD ENGINEERING SERVICES DEVELOPMENT REVIEW ON

<input type="checkbox"/>	DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION	<input type="checkbox"/>	ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT
<input type="checkbox"/>	OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	DRAFT PLAN OF CONDOMINIUM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SITE PLAN APPROVAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MINOR VARIANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	CONSENT APPLICATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	SEVERANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER -		
FILE NO.:		A07/2021	
DATE DUE TO PLANNING		December 11, 2020	
APPLICANT / OWNER:		Jillian Holmes, Wilfrid Laurier University	
ADDRESS		73 George Street	
TRANSPORTATION			

1. No comment.

Jacob McDonald, C.E.T.
Transportation Technologist



**CITY OF BRANTFORD
ENGINEERING SERVICES DEVELOPMENT REVIEW ON**

<input type="checkbox"/>	DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION	<input type="checkbox"/>	ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT
<input type="checkbox"/>	OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	DRAFT PLAN OF CONDOMINIUM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SITE PLAN APPROVAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MINOR VARIANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	CONSENT APPLICATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	SEVERANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER -		
FILE NO.:		A07/2021	
DATE DUE TO PLANNING		December 11, 2020	
APPLICANT / OWNER:		Jillian Holmes, Wilfrid Laurier University	
ADDRESS		73 George Street	
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES			

I reviewed the Minor Variance application and sketch—as prepared by Sanford Media Group Inc.—on behalf of Environmental Services have no objections or concerns.

Jennifer Elliott, LET, C.E.T.
Senior Project Manager, Environmental Services



**CITY OF BRANTFORD
ENGINEERING SERVICES DEVELOPMENT REVIEW ON**


<input type="checkbox"/>	DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION	<input type="checkbox"/>	ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT
<input type="checkbox"/>	OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	DRAFT PLAN OF CONDOMINIUM
<input type="checkbox"/>	SITE PLAN APPROVAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MINOR VARIANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	CONSENT APPLICATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	SEVERANCE
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER -		
FILE NO.:		A07/2021	
DATE DUE TO PLANNING		December 11, 2020	
APPLICANT / OWNER:		Jillian Holmes, Wilfrid Laurier University	
ADDRESS		73 George Street	
DEVELOPMENT ENGINEERING			

➤ No comments.

Adam Quibell, P.Eng., C.Tech.
Development Engineering Reviewer

*ADDITIONAL COMMENTS MAY BE ADDED AS A RESULT OF ADDITIONAL SUBMISSIONS OR INFORMATION IS PROVIDED *

December 14, 2020
DATE


Gary Peever, P.Eng.,
Manager, Development Engineering

Appendix G – Area of Public Notification

AREA OF PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Application: A07/2021
73 George Street



Legend

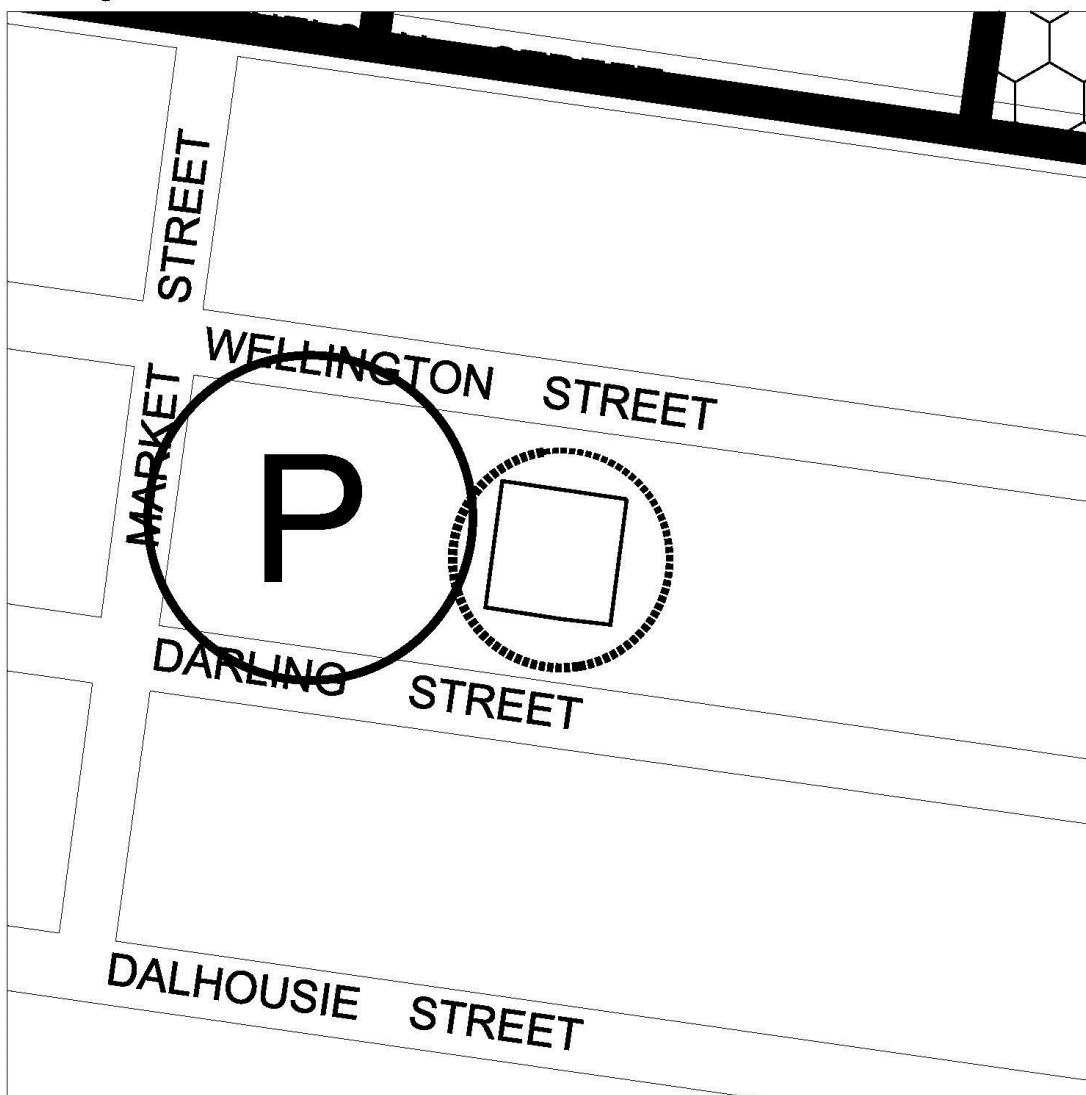
-  Subject Land
-  Notified Properties
-  60 m Buffer from Subject Land



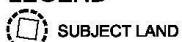
Appendix H – Official Plan

OFFICIAL PLAN

Application: A07/2021
73 George Street



LEGEND



- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREA
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREA
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREA
- GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AREA
- MIXED INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL AREA
- BUSINESS PARK AREA
- MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL
- MAJOR OPEN SPACE

- CORE COMMERCIAL AREA
- CC COMMUNITY CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREA
- GC GENERAL COMMERCIAL AREA
- MCR MIXED COMMERCIAL RESIDENTIAL AREA
- DC DISTRICT CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREA
- NC NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREA
- HC HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL AREA
- NFC NEW FORMAT COMMERCIAL AREA

- (C) CEMETERY
- (S) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- FREEWAY
- LONG TERM CORRIDOR PROTECTION
- (SP) SPECIALIZED PARK and OPEN SPACE
- (CP) COMMUNITY PARK and OPEN SPACE
- (P) NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK and OPEN SPACE

Appendix I – Zoning

ZONING

Application: A07/2021
73 George Street



Legend

-  Subject Land
-  Zone Boundary

ZONING (Bylaw 160-90) and County of Brant(61-16)

- C1 Core Commercial
- C2 Fringe Core Commercial
- OS1 Open Space Type 1
- # Exception Number

