

Ben:

Thank you for your e-mail. I just returned from vacation and have now had an opportunity to review your questions.

For background, earlier this year, the proponent for Lighthouse Dental applied to the Building Department for a number of signs, both facia and free-standing, to advertise its dental business in the north end unit of the building at the corner of Division and Elgin Street East (formerly Lighthouse Restaurant). It was pretty clear to us from the outset that the proponent wanted to make sure that its dental business "brand" was highly visible to the public from the street, as it was a new business to the community.

The Sign By-law only permits 1 free-standing sign per property, however Council approved a 2nd free-standing sign on Elgin Street when the new building to the east was constructed years ago. Because the proponent was requesting a 3rd free-standing sign specifically for its business (in the form of a large tooth on a pole), the application proceeded to Council for approval which was denied. The proponent then revised his proposal to include just the facia signage and new sign bands within the existing free-standing signage, and submitted same to the Building Department.

Outside of the downtown Main Central Area, there are no size restrictions for facia signs in the Sign By-law. As you may know, the dental office occupies the north end corner unit of the existing building, and accordingly has a significant amount of linear building frontage (approx. 28 m/92 ft) on two streets. This enables the proponent to place quite a bit of facia signage on both faces of the unit. In fact, the former Lighthouse Restaurant signage occupied both building faces, as does DQ and many other businesses located throughout the municipality.

As part of the renovation process for the office, the proponent painted the exterior of the building to include a new horizontal blue band beneath the parapet, within which the new sign is located. This can have the effect of accentuating the signage and making it look larger than what it actually is. The LED ribbon light trim also makes the sign stand out, but this is also a practice I see elsewhere in the municipality. The LED "OPEN" sign (which in itself can be quite bright) is actually on the inside of the window of the unit and the sign regulations do not apply to building interiors. As for the "tooth" sign at the corner of the building, the proponent always planned on having a large tooth feature of some sort on the property, either on its own free-standing pole or, following Council's denial, on the building itself.

The Lighthouse Dental business signage does appear to be relatively large and bright (and maybe a bit different from what we are used to, having a tooth bolted to the side of the building), however I do not feel it is disproportionate to the size of the unit or the building frontage, or consider it over-bearing towards the streetscape, but rather is quite tastefully and professionally done in my opinion.

Overall, I honestly don't believe this was a "FU" moment to the Town because the proponent had always planned to have a heavy emphasis on signage in an effort to maximize its business exposure to the public and potential customers. The specification plans and details submitted were very professionally-prepared by a reputable sign company, complete with structural engineering details, colour swatches and codes, colour renderings/artwork, photos, maps, labels and so on. This was not done on the cheap or with an intent to do anything other than promote the dental business in a beneficial manner. The Lighthouse Dental signage is very similar to another dental operation in Strathroy called "Brightview Dental", which if you look at its photos contains very similar sign features, lines and images.

I hope the above helps answer your questions.

Best regards,

Glenn J. McGlashon, MCIP, RPP  
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-----Original Message-----

From: benburd [mailto:ben@eagle.ca]

Sent: October-21-16 7:39 AM

To: Glenn McGlashon <gmcglashon@cobourg.ca>

Subject: The Dentists' office at Elgin and Division

Good morning Glenn, as I came back into town last night and waited at the traffic lights I could not help being assaulted by the walls of neon that cover the two facias of the NorthWest corner of the building.

Questions;

If a freestanding sign that was not within the specs of the sign bylaw how did this sign get through the process and if so who approved it?

How come the applicant gets two facia signs?

Why are the facia signs installed larger than allowed?

Looks like a big FU to the Town and if it isn't who approved it?

ben