



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES *Staff Report*

REPORT NO: DS-2025-01

TO: Committee of the Whole

SUBMITTED BY: Harold O’Krafka, MCIP RPP PLE
Director of Development Services

PREPARED BY: Andrew Martin, MCIP RPP
Manager of Planning and Economic Development

Cameron Miller, MA MCIP RPP
Senior Development Planner

REVIEWED BY: Greg Clark, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 3, 2025

SUBJECT: Sign By-law Variance – 374 Hamilton Road, New Hamburg

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council approve a variance to Township Sign By-law 2002-68 as it applies to the billboard sign located at 374 Hamilton Road, New Hamburg, to increase the maximum allowable percentage of non-Wilmot based content from 20% to 50% of the total sign face.

SUMMARY:

This application proposes to modify regulations for an existing billboard sign located at 374 Hamilton Road, New Hamburg. The proposal would increase the maximum allowable percentage of non-Wilmot businesses from 20% to 50% of the total sign face.

BACKGROUND:

The original billboard sign at this location was licensed in 2011 and has been renewed on an annual basis in accordance with the Township’s billboard license review. The conditions of the

original billboard license established that a maximum of 20% of the billboard may be used to advertise business activities not located in the Township. As part of the annual licensing review, staff calculated that the percentage of non-Wilmot businesses was approximately 32% of the total sign area, up from 27% in 2023

Council approved a billboard renewal in 2023 and 2024 despite the minor overage of non-Wilmot based content since there was a high number of vacancies on the sign that would otherwise accommodate Wilmot businesses. The applicants were notified that prior to a renewal in 2025, they would be required to bring the billboard into compliance either by removing some non-Wilmot content or by applying for a variance to the sign by-law. The applicants opted to apply for a variance to the sign by-law to allow for an increase in the allowable percentage.

Section 24 of the Township Sign By-law provides that Council may authorize minor variances from the provisions of the by-law provided the general intent and purpose of the by-law is maintained.

REPORT:

This application proposes to modify regulations for an existing billboard sign located at 374 Hamilton Road, New Hamburg to increase permitted non-Wilmot based content from 20% to 50% of the sign.

Staff suggest that an increase from 20% to 50% is appropriate given the history of vacancies on the sign. As there have been empty spaces on the sign for numerous years, it is clear that there has been an opportunity to advertise local businesses. Rather than continue to have vacancies on the sign, the proposed increase will allow greater flexibility for advertising, while continuing to ensure the sign remains available to advertise local content.

Allowing for up to 50% the sign to contain non-Wilmot businesses is consistent with the Took-A-Look Billboard (located at the intersection of Waterloo Street and Nafziger Road) which is permitted to have one side (50%) advertising non-Wilmot business activities.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

Prosperous Businesses & Balanced Growth

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The application fees, established by the Township of Wilmot Fees and Charges By-law, were collected at the time of application.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Sign location and details