

The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council

From: Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning

Date: November 27, 2024

Subject: Development Permit Amendment

File: DPA01064 ● 1286 McKenzie Avenue

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council approve Development Permit Amendment DPA01064 to allow a new Freestanding Sign adjacent to McKenzie Avenue.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Report is to seek direction from Council on the subject application. The application is for an amendment to Development Permit DPR800016 to replace the existing freestanding sign for The Root Cellar at 1286 McKenzie Avenue. The Applicant is requesting Sign Bylaw variances to exceed the maximum permitted sign area, copy area and changeable copy area for a freestanding sign. The applicant is The Sign Pad (Lyle Warren).

BACKGROUND

Land Use and Neighbourhood Context

The A-3 Rural (Farm Market) Zoned site is located along the McKenzie Corridor, within the Blenkinsop Local Area, at the northwest corner of Blenkinsop Road and McKenzie Avenue (see Figure 1). The principal building and associated structures on the site are used by The Root Cellar. Surrounding land use is mostly residential with agricultural land to the north.

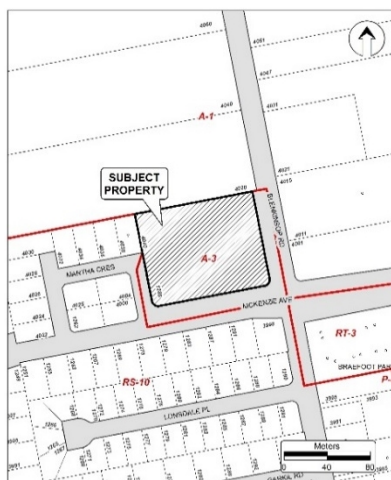


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Context

Sign Design

The Root Cellar seeks to install an illuminated Freestanding Sign that can be seen from McKenzie Avenue. The applicant has stated that the proposed sign was designed with a modern aesthetic to appeal to their current and prospective customers while ensuring the business has consistent and easily recognizable branding. Additionally, the digital display features automatic dimming for efficiency and visibility.



Figure 2: Existing and Proposed Freestanding Sign adjacent to McKenzie Avenue (from plans prepared by The Sign Pad)

DISCUSSION

Proposed Variances

The applicant has requested Sign Bylaw variances to exceed the maximum permitted sign area, copy area and changeable copy area for a freestanding sign. The site is located within Sign District B. Sign District B permits one Freestanding Sign for those properties which are bounded by two intersecting streets. The variance analysis is as follows:

	Bylaw Permitted	Proposed	Variance (Difference)
Copy Area	2.8 m ²	4.83 m ²	2.03 m ²
Sign Area	5.6 m ²	8.25 m ²	2.65 m ²
Changeable Copy Area	1/3 of copy area (33%)	38%	5%

The applicant has stated that the proposed Freestanding Sign is an important aid to guide customers to The Root Cellar as it will maintain consistent branding and is in support of their mission to serve the community with quality agricultural products. The applicant has explained they intend to make use of the current posts as a strategy to minimize costs and mitigate environmental impact by reducing waste associated with the disposal of the existing signage. The variance to allow an increased changeable copy area is necessary to accommodate the pre-manufactured high-efficiency digital display.

When comparing the existing sign to the proposed sign, the applicant is proposing an approximately 180% increase to copy area (slightly less than triple the existing) and a 93% increase to sign area (slightly less than double the existing). There is no permit on file for the addition of changeable copy. If approved, this development permit amendment and consequent sign permit will make the sign compliant.

	Existing Sign	Proposed	Increase
Copy Area	~1.72 m ²	4.83 m ²	+3.11 m ²
Sign Area	~4.29 m ²	8.25 m ²	+3.96 m ²
Changeable Copy Area	no permit on file	38% of total copy area	-

It will be a condition of the sign permit that the portion of the sign devoted to changeable copy must not be changed within a 24-hour period and the information must be static (no animation and/or movement of the text or graphics is permitted). Additionally, the Sign Bylaw prohibits animated signs which use change of lighting to depict action or create special effects or a pictorial scene. When a sign is to be installed within 5 kilometres of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory (DAO), illumination must be from within the sign, however, the proposed sign is outside the 5-kilometre radius and the requirement does not apply. The proposed sign must comply with Table A, within the Sign Bylaw, which states any light source of 50W or less outside the 5-kilometre radius of the DAO does not require any shielding. The applicant has provided the LED panel specifications for the changeable copy portion indicating the screen is capable of 8000 nits which is a typical brightness for outdoors in direct sunlight. The Sign Bylaw refers to wattage which is a measure of power usage not a measure of brightness; consequently, the lighting portion of the bylaw should be reviewed and amended to include current lighting technology. The applicant has indicated that there are 100-levels of brightness control and the screen auto-dims at night to level 36 but can be further reduced if necessary. In reference to the sign area and copy area, outdoor advertising signs of the type constructed of translucent materials and wholly illuminated from within do not require shielding. Dark backgrounds with light lettering or symbols are preferred, to minimize detrimental effects. The proposed sign follows this desired design form.

PLANNING POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no policies that directly relate to this application to provide guidance or to analyze the form and character.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. That Council approve the proposed Development Permit Amendment with variances.
2. That Council rejects the recommendations as outlined in the staff Report.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications to the 2024 – 2028 Financial Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications to the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

CONCLUSION

The subject application is for a Development Permit Amendment to install a new Freestanding Sign at The Root Cellar. The application includes a request to vary the provisions of the Sign Bylaw to allow an increased sign area, copy area, and changeable copy area. The proposed

sign introduces a modern and energy-efficient design aimed at minimizing environmental impact. It ensures brand consistency for this established Saanich business and aligns with The Root Cellar's commitment to providing the community with quality agricultural products. There are no policies to provide clear or specific guidance regarding form and character, but the Sign Bylaw provides lighting regulations and conditions for the changeable copy portion to remain static and unchanged within a 24-hour period. For these reasons, the variance can be supported.

Prepared by: Caitlin Yancoff, Senior Planning Technician

Reviewed by: Amber Walker, Acting Manager of Current Planning

Approved by: Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.

Brent Reems, Chief Administrative Officer