

DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

Title: 9 Buchanan Street – SGN2400132 – Ground Signs

Date Prepared: February 25, 2025

Report To: Committee of the Whole

Councillor and Role: Councillor Maggie Burton, Built Heritage Experts Panel

Ward: Ward 2

Decision/Direction Required:

To approve three (3) Ground Signs at 9 Buchanan Street, the JAG Hotel extension, facing Water Street.

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The City received an application to install three (3) illuminated ground signs outside of 9 Buchanan Street (the JAG Hotel extension), in Heritage Area 3. The signs are proposed in a public landscaped area on the Water Street side of the building. This is not a designated Heritage Building. The new building, including a new concert hall, overhangs the public space, which remains owned by the City.

The St. John's Sign By-Law, section 2(j), defines a ground sign as “a sign affixed to or supported by the ground and not attached to a building”.

Section 56(1) of the Sign By-Law states that “[o]ne ground sign may be erected on each side of a building fronting on a street.” The applicant is applying for three (3) ground signs on the side of the building facing Water Street. Each sign conforms to the maximum size requirements in sections 56(2) and (3) of the Sign By-Law. Since the applicant is apply for more than one ground sign, the signs are considered non-conforming.

In accordance with section 59 of the Sign By-Law, the Built Heritage Experts Panel (BHEP) may recommend to Council the acceptance of non-conforming signs whose design or situation merits such consideration. Council may accept or reject the recommendation.

The proposed ground signs are heritage panels, each having a historical photograph from the City Archives, all showing the general neighbourhood. The three (3) signs are:

- Sign 1 shows a horse and streetcar in 1925 on Water Street West, near the intersection of Topsail Road and Waterford Bridge Road.
- Sign 2 is a winter scene from 1904, at the intersection of Water Street West and Springdale Street (the current site).
- Sign 3 shows the T. Fitzgibbon building from 1899, at the intersection of Water Street West and Buchanan Street (the current site).

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The BHEP reviewed the application on February 5, 2025 and recommends accepting the non-conforming signs, subject to the following:

- Include tactile characters on the signage;
- Locate the signs on a barrier-free path of travel in a public space and meet the requirements of CSA-B651 “Accessible Design for the Built Environment”; and
- Provide additional contextual information on the photographs.

The BHEP comments were sent to the applicant for consideration. The applicant revised the proposed signs to add contextual information on the photographs, as shown on the attachment. However, because the construction of the landscaped area is well underway, it would be difficult to relocate the signs. Electrical conduit is already installed underground and the paved walkways are in place. Since the signs are located in garden beds, tactile characters were not added to the signs because no one could easily reach them.

The ground signs proposed for 9 Buchanan Street (attached for review) are proposed by the applicant as a complement to the public space and for the enjoyment of people staying at the hotel, attending concerts in the hall, or passing by on Water Street. The proposed ground signs are recommended for approval.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Not applicable.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Property owner; neighbouring residents and property owners in the heritage area; heritage groups.
3. Is this a New Plan or Strategy: No
4. Alignment with Strategic Directions:

A Sustainable City: Plan for land use and preserve and enhance the natural and built environment where we live.

A Sustainable City: Facilitate and create the conditions that drive the economy by being business and industry friendly; and being a location of choice for residents, businesses and visitors.

5. Alignment with Adopted Plans: St. John’s Sign By-Law
6. Accessibility and Inclusion: Not applicable.
7. Legal or Policy Implications: Not applicable.
8. Privacy Implications: Not applicable.
9. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Not applicable.

10. Human Resource Implications: Not applicable.

11. Procurement Implications: Not applicable.

12. Information Technology Implications: Not applicable.

13. Other Implications: Not applicable.

Recommendation:

That Council approve three (3) ground signs located at 9 Buchanan Street, facing Water Street, as proposed.

Prepared by: Lindsay Church, MCIP, Planner III – Urban Design and Heritage

Approved by: Ken O'Brien, MCIP, Chief Municipal Planner

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	9 Buchanan Street - SGN2400132 - Ground Signs.docx
Attachments:	- 9 BUCHANAN STREET.pdf - JAG Hotel - 022425 - Illuminated Heritage Panel - Ground Signs.pdf - Landscaped Area.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Feb 27, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ken O'Brien - Feb 27, 2025 - 2:44 PM

No Signature - Task assigned to Jason Sinyard was completed by workflow administrator Theresa Walsh

Jason Sinyard - Feb 27, 2025 - 2:44 PM