VAUGHAN

REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE

FILE No. - P43

FOR INQUIRIES: **PLEASE QUOTE ITEM & REPORT NO.**

July 3, 2012

Mr. Denis Kelly, Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street, Box 147
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. Kelly:

RE: ELECTION SIGN REVIEW

Attached for your information is **Item 5, Report No. 25,** of the Committee of the Whole regarding the above-noted matter which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan at its meeting of June 26, 2012.

I draw your attention to Clause 2) of the recommendation as follows:

> *"2) That staff negotiate with the Region of York, with the objective of harmonizing the related by-laws and enforcement with respect to election signs"*

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Abrams
City Clerk

Attachment:
Extract

JAA/as

City of Vaughan, Office of the City Clerk, 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Vaughan, Ontario L6A 1T1
Tel: 905.832-8504 website www.vaughan.ca email Jeffrey.Abrams@vaughan.ca

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2012

Item 5, Report No. 25, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on June 26, 2012.

5 ELECTION SIGN REVIEW

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

1) **That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Legal & Administrative Services & City Solicitor, and the Director of Enforcement Services, dated June 5, 2012, be approved;**

2) **That staff negotiate with the Region of York, with the objective of harmonizing the related by-laws and enforcement with respect to election signs;**

3) **That staff bring back a report with options on how to improve enforcement, in order to provide a level playing field; and**

4) **That staff hold a forum with past candidates, residents and regional staff to discuss election sign issues, including size, and report back with recommendations for Council's consideration.**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Legal & Administrative Services & City Solicitor, and the Director of Enforcement Services recommend that this report be received for information.

Contribution to Sustainability

N/A

Economic Impact

N/A

Communications Plan

N/A

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the City's experience with respect to placement of election signs during the weeks prior to the 2010 Municipal Election.

Background - Analysis and Options

By-law 203-92, the Sign By-law, regulates the placement of signs on public property, including restrictions on the placement of election signs.

Currently, the following restrictions are in place under the By-law:

- Election signs cannot be erected prior to the close of nominations or the dropping of the writ, as the case may be – effectively allowing a six (6) week period for signs to be erected.

.../2

- Candidates must pay a non-refundable fee to the City prior to the erection of election signs.
- Signs may not be erected on municipal road allowances, or on City property.
- Signs cannot exceed 5 square metres, and must meet minimum set back requirements of 1 metre from all street lines and 1.5 metres from a common boundary with an adjacent lot.
- Signs must also be removed 48 hours after an election.

In addition, election signs are permitted to be erected on intersections of Regional roads with another Regional road, or with a City road. These are subject to specific restrictions to numbers per candidate per corner of the intersection, distance from the intersection, and sight lines.

With the exception of the time when election signs can be erected, most of these restrictions have remained unchanged over the past decade.

As with all sign enforcement on City property, staff proactively patrol the City road allowances for improperly placed signs. Any illegally erected signs are removed by staff and are returned at no charge to the candidate, or their representatives. The City does not enforce for illegally erected election signs on Regional roads, however, during the 2010 Municipal Elections, and subsequent provincial and federal elections, York Region staff have proactively enforced for illegally erected election sign on Regional road allowances, removing any illegal signs.

Since 2010, there have been several elections in this jurisdiction for which election signs have been erected, including the General Municipal Election , a Federal By-election, a School Board By-election, the General Federal Election and the General Provincial Election.

The table below indicates the number of signs seized by the City during these elections.

Election Signs Impounded by City of Vaughan Staff

YEAR	ELECTION	# OF CONFISCATED SIGNS
2010	Municipal Election	6,016
2010	Federal By-election	350
2010	School Board By-election	204
2011	Federal Election	1,245
2011	Provincial Election	1,676
TOTAL		**9,492**

In addition to the above, York Region advises that they removed a further 6,005 signs during the 2010 Municipal Election.

Significant staff resources are dedicated to the enforcement of election sign restrictions, including responding to complaints about signage at polling stations on election day.

The provisions in surrounding municipality's sign by-laws are similar to those in the City of Vaughan. Although various restrictions and processes have been implemented over the past number of years, a large number of election signs are confiscated each election campaign.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is in keeping with the Vaughan Vision in respect to the pursuit of service excellence and providing a safe environment.

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

The current restrictions on erection of election signs is proactively enforced by City Enforcement staff on City road allowances and other City-owned property. The Region enforces for illegally erected election signs on its own road allowances. The non-refundable fee imposed on candidates provides a nominal off-set to the City resources expended in enforcement of the By-law. No changes are being recommended at this time.

Attachments

N/A

Report prepared by:

Tony Thompson, Director
Rick Girard, Managing Supervisor