

Tree Removal - 4 Glen Edyth Drive (Midtown)

(City Council on November 23, 24 and 25, 1999, adopted this Clause, without amendment.)

The Toronto Community Council recommends that a permit for tree removal at 4 Glen Edyth Drive be issued, conditional on the planting of replacement trees acceptable to the Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, and on the applicant making a contribution to the City for the greening of the Glen Edyth Playground.

The Toronto Community Council submits the following report (October 20, 1999) from the Commissioner, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism:

Purpose:

An application for a permit to remove two trees on private property has been filed by Mr. And Mrs. Raymond, 400 Walmer Road, #709, Toronto, M5P 2X7, owners of 4 Glen Edyth Drive, Toronto, M4V 2V7.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) a permit for tree removal be refused; or
- (2) a permit for tree removal be issued conditional on the planting of replacement trees acceptable to the Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism.

Background:

The applicants would like to remove two spruce trees that they feel are growing too close to the house. They are concerned that the roots will damage the house and would like more sunlight to reach the east side of the house.

Comments:

The trees in question are 37 and 39 centimetre diameter blue spruce, in fair condition, located approximately 2 metres from the east foundation of the house. The lower limbs of both spruce trees have been pruned in the past to provide clearance and light to the first floor of the home and further pruning to raise the crowns approximately 2 additional metres would not impact the health of the trees and would provide the additional light desired by the applicants.

A report from a registered professional engineer was provided to staff on October 19, 1999, and provides information on the condition of the basement foundation walls. This report was not included with the original application for tree removal by the applicants. The report states that the basement foundation walls are constructed of brick masonry construction and the east wall bulges towards the interior with water stains evident. The report also states that the basement slab on grade shows evidence of water intrusion with freestanding water present near the centre drain. Prosum Engineering Limited conducted an exploratory dig immediately east of the east foundation wall. At shallow depth (15 to 25 centimetres), an extensive root system was encountered including small feeder roots up to roots with diameters of 25 centimetres. Numerous large diameter roots were found adjacent to the foundation according to the engineers report. The engineers report concludes that the inward bulging of the foundation wall is likely a result of the lateral pressure being exerted by the root systems of the two spruce trees. Removal of the two trees is the recommendation of the engineer to allow waterproofing and repair work to the foundation wall and to prevent further lateral pressure on the wall from future root growth.

According to the engineer, waterproofing and repair work to the foundation wall is necessary. Extensive root pruning will be required to accommodate these repairs. The drainage problem at the foundation must have been neglected for many years allowing the roots of the spruce trees to establish themselves in such close proximity to the foundation. The root pruning required at this time will significantly impact the health of the two trees and may also destabilize them.

A notice of application sign was posted on the property for the required fourteen day posting period, in order to notify the neighbourhood and provide an opportunity for objection to the application. Two written objections were received in response to the application to remove the trees in question. Copies of these letters have been forwarded to the Community Council Secretary for Community Council to review.

The applicant also has a large chestnut tree on the property, growing adjacent to the garage. This tree was not included in the application for tree removal. In undertaking repairs to the garage and in discussions with the professional engineer, the applicant would like to remove this tree to prevent further damage to the garage and driveway. The chestnut tree is a viable specimen, growing in a poor location with respect to the garage and driveway, and requires the consent of City Council prior to removal. The professional engineer has reported that this tree should be removed to avoid further damage to the repaired garage. The community has not been given the opportunity to oppose the removal of the chestnut as it was not a part of the original application.

Conclusions:

The two blue spruce trees, aside from their environmental benefits, are important aesthetically to the community, especially the residents of Glen Edyth Drive. Foundation repairs are necessary, and in the opinion of a registered professional engineer, the removal of the trees is required to carry out these repairs successfully.

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Ms. Joyce Raymond appeared before the Toronto Community Council in connection with the foregoing matter.

(A copy of Attachments No. 1 – 5, referred to in the foregoing report, was forwarded to all Members of the Toronto Community Council with the agenda for its meeting on November 9, 1999, and a copy thereof is on file in the office of the City Clerk.)