

22 Oakworth Crescent – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	March 5, 2007
To:	Scarborough Community Council
From:	Brenda Librecz, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 37 – Scarborough Centre
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

To report on an application filed by the property owner for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned 65-centimetre diameter American elm tree located at the front at 22 Oakworth Crescent. The application has been made due to concerns expressed by the property owner that tree roots are causing sewer problems, and proximity of the tree to overhead wires and the house.

A planting plan has not been submitted with the application.

Inspection of the tree by staff revealed that the tree is in fair condition. The tree is considered significant to the neighbourhood since there are few American elms remaining. With proper care and maintenance, the tree should continue to provide benefits to the community for years to come. Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that the request for permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree at 22 Oakworth Crescent be denied.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In accordance with *City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, an application has been made for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at the front of the property municipally known as 22 Oakworth Crescent. This application has been made due to concerns about tree roots causing sewer problems, and proximity to overhead wires and the house.

COMMENTS

An application for a permit has been received from the property owner of 22 Oakworth Crescent for the removal of one (1) privately-owned 65-centimetre diameter American elm tree.

The tree is healthy and can continue to be maintained in fair condition. The tree has a well-developed crown, and the trunk of the tree appears to be sound. Hydro wires run across and below the tree crown.

The tree is located 1.8 meters from the corner of the house. A patio stone walkway in the vicinity of the tree is uneven, but can likely be fixed easily without damaging the tree.

Submitted with the application was a copy of a Sewer Connection Blockage Report from Toronto Water. The pipe was snaked from the clean out and roots were found, but the flow test was reported to be okay. Tree roots do not cause drains or sewer pipes to break, but they will grow into and clog drains that have pre-existing cracks and resultant leakage. Drains are usually located 1.8 meters to 2.4 meters below ground level, while tree roots grow almost exclusively in the upper 0.6 meters of soil, because they need not only nutrients, but also oxygen to survive. When drains leak, they provide oxygen and nutrient rich water deep in the soil, which allow tree roots to grow deep into the soil and get into the already cracked drain pipe. It is the policy of City Council to not approve the removal of trees due to drain and/or sewer blockages. Tree removal will not solve all the problems, as cracks will still permit leaking from pipes. Replacement of old drains with new PVC piping, continuous between the house and sewer, eliminates future blockages by tree roots.

Branches of the tree do extend over two houses. The Arborist Report submitted with the application has not identified the tree as being hazardous or requiring any maintenance. Service wires to the house from the hydro pole located on City road allowance do run through the crown of the tree. This is a common occurrence with trees.

As required under *Section 813-17, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a 'Notice' of application sign was posted on the subject property for the minimum 14-day posting period. The posting of notice serves to notify the community of

the application and provide an opportunity for objection. No letters of objection were received in response to the posting.

The property owner did not submit a replanting plan with the application to destroy the tree. Should the request for permit to remove the privately-owned American elm tree located at 22 Oakworth Crescent be approved, approval must be conditional on the owner submitting and implementing a planting plan to the satisfaction of Urban Forestry.

This tree is very significant and is a valuable part of the forest community that exists within this area. So many American elm trees were previously lost due to Dutch Elm Disease. It appears that this tree has resistance to the disease, making it even more significant. With proper care and maintenance, the subject tree should continue to provide benefits to the owner and to the community for many years to come. Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

CONTACT

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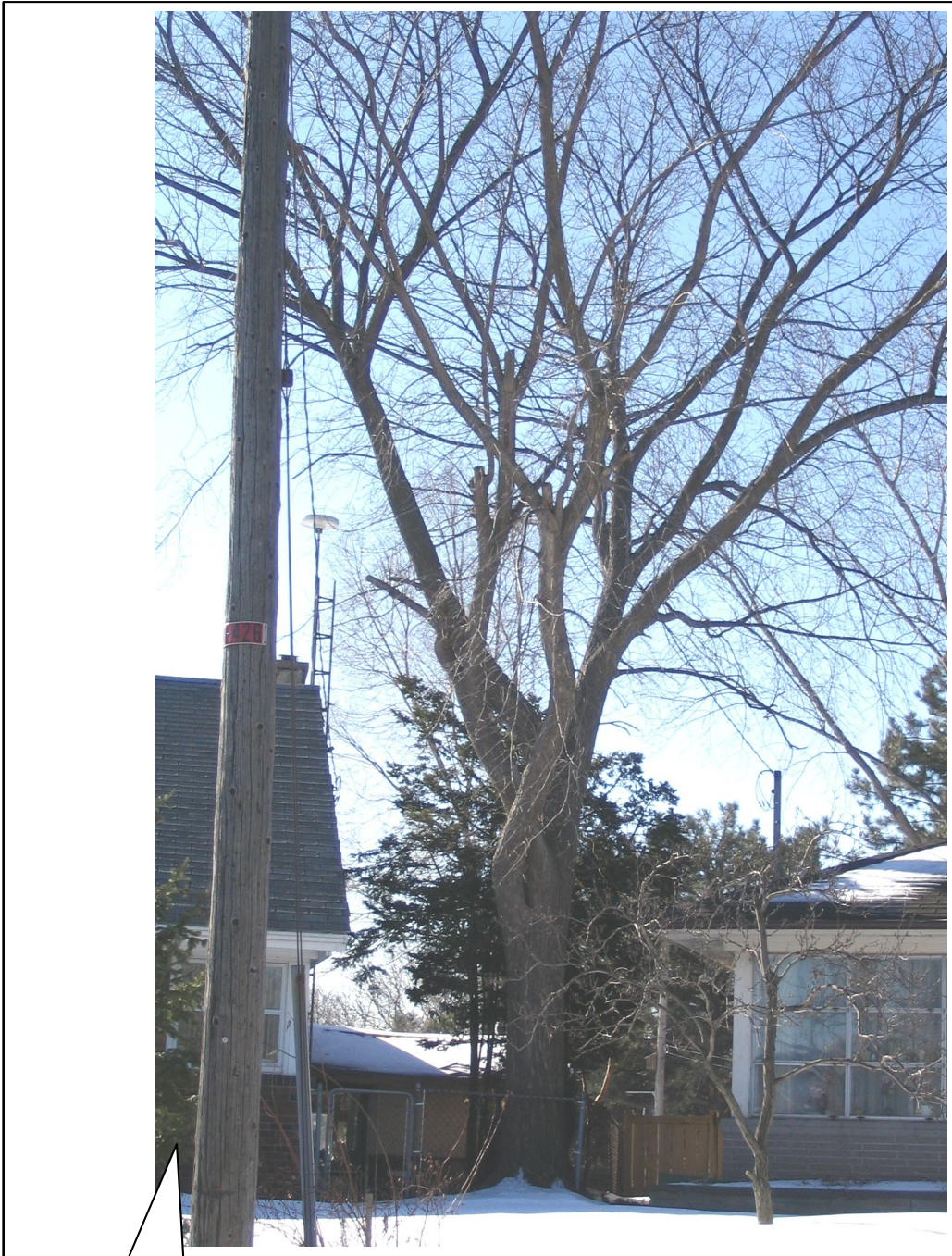
SIGNATURE

Brenda Librecz
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Photograph of American elm tree

Attachment – Photograph of American elm tree



22 Oakworth Crescent