

## **90 Cultra Square – Application to Remove a Private Tree**

<b>Date:</b>	March 5, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Scarborough Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Brenda Librecz, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 43 – Scarborough East
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

### **SUMMARY**

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To report on an application filed by the property owner for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned twin-stem Carolina poplar tree having diameters of 52 centimetres and 58 centimetres, located at the front of 90 Cultra Square. The application has been made due to concerns expressed by the property owner that tree roots are causing damage to the driveway at 92 Cultra Square and ongoing sewer backup problems at 90 Cultra Square.

The Arborist Report indicates that the owner is willing to plant one replacement tree; however a replanting plan was not submitted with the application.

Inspection of the tree by staff revealed that the tree is in good condition. The tree is well-maintained, and has a full, well-shaped crown, and is one of the largest and most significant trees in the neighbourhood. 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**

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The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that the request for permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree at 90 Cultra Square be denied.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

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## 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 90 Cultra Square. This application has been made due to concerns about trees roots causing damage to a driveway at 92 Cultra Square and ongoing sewer backups at 90 Cultra Square.

## COMMENTS

An application for a permit has been received from the property owner of 90 Cultra Square for the removal of one (1) privately-owned twin-stem Carolina poplar tree, having diameters of 52 centimetres and 58 centimetres.

The tree is healthy and can continue to be maintained in good condition. The tree has a well-developed crown and the trunk of the tree appears to be sound.

The tree is located eight metres from the driveway at 92 Cultra Square. There are some cracks in the driveway, however any cracks and heaving of the driveway has been caused by frost damage. The fact that there is a tree near the driveway is incidental to the condition of the driveway.

A letter from a plumbing company was submitted with the application which indicates evidence of roots in the sewer line. 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 metres to 2.4 metres below ground level, while tree roots grow almost exclusively in the upper 0.6 metres 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, will eliminate future blockages by tree roots.

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. One letter of objection was received in response to the posting.

The Arborist Report indicates that the owner is willing to plant one replacement tree with a calliper of 30 to 50 millimetres; however a replanting plan was not submitted.

Should the request for permit to remove the privately-owned Carolina poplar tree located at 90 Cultra Square be approved, approval must be conditional on the owner implementing the replacement tree planting.

This tree is very significant and is a valuable part of the forest community that exists within this area. 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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Parks, Forestry and Recreation  
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## **SIGNATURE**

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Brenda Librecz  
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 - Photographs of silver Carolina poplar tree  
Attachment 2 - Letter of Objection

Attachment 1 – Photographs of Carolina poplar tree



90 Cultra Square



Driveway at 92 Cultra Square

## Attachment 2 – Letter of Objection

To Mr. D. Soknacki councilor.soknacki @[toronto.ca](mailto:councilor.soknacki@toronto.ca)

Dear Mr. Soknacki

I am writing you in regards to the removal of a poplar tree, which is located at 90 Cultra Square Scarborough Ontario. I noticed the sign on the tree after coming back from holiday. The notice was posted by the city of Toronto and the contact name was H. Nguyen. It also stated if we had any concerns to call, which I did. I called this lady and asked why the tree was being removed as it stated on the posting that it was a healthy tree. It is at least 50-60 years old and is in good condition. I was told that the house that the tree stands on, and the neighbor next to them have complained about sewer back up, and garage foundation problems. I know that that 92 Cultra Square did have a tree removed from the front of his house about two years ago and maybe that was the problem and not the poplar tree. Mrs. Nguyen told me about the complaint and I was told that they are going to investigate them. I hope this is correct, as I would hate to see a tree, which is that old, and healthy removed. Hopefully the city will do all they can to assist the homeowners with out having to remove it. After living in the beaches for years I know they just don't cut down healthy trees, as we all know how good for our environment they are. I am also going to send a copy of this letter to H. Nguyen and hopefully something can be done. I am not sure if I am the only one to call about this matter but I know my neighbors and I are going to miss the tree. There are not enough old trees in the city and if everyone complained about one on there property we would be living in a very oxygen starved city. Thank you for taking the time to consider this letter and hopefully look into the matter. I would appreciate any feed back or recommendations that the city could come up with without having to remove that big old poplar.