

53 Grandville Avenue – City Tree Removal

Date:	December 11, 2007
To:	Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 11 – York South-Weston
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report requests Council's authority to deny a request for removal of one (1) City-owned tree fronting 53 Grandville Avenue. The owner claims that the tree has caused damage to the house foundation, drains, steps and walkway that have required repairs in the past. The problems experienced by the owner still exist and removing the tree would help to address them, in their opinion. Staff are of the opinion that any further repairs to the house can be undertaken that include the protection and retention of the tree.

Inspection of the tree by staff revealed that the tree is in good condition with a well-developed crown. The intent of the City's street tree by-law is to preserve healthy trees and to ensure a sustainable urban forest in the City. The subject tree will continue to provide environmental benefits to the community and Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that City Council deny the request to remove one (1) City-owned Norway maple tree fronting 53 Grandville Avenue.

Financial Impact

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

ISSUE BACKGROUND

A request for removal of one City-owned tree has been received from the owner of 53 Grandville Avenue, in accordance with the provisions of *City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article II*. The applicant would like to have the tree removed to facilitate repairs to the house and to prevent further damage which, in their opinion, is being caused by the tree.

COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received a request from the owner of 53 Grandville Avenue that the City consider the removal of one City-owned tree fronting 53 Grandville Avenue. The homeowner has indicated that the subject tree's roots have caused leaks in the building foundation and heaving of a concrete walk and steps. Drain problems and concrete floor cracks were expressed verbally as additional concerns, during an October 31, 2007, site visit with the owner.

The tree in question is a healthy 64-centimetre diameter Norway maple, *Acer platanoides*, (Attachment 1), with a well-balanced crown. It is not a candidate for routine removal based on its current condition. Tree roots do not cause damage to drains, sewer pipes, building foundation walls, or floors, but rather gain entry through pre-existing cracks. It has been the policy of City Council to not approve the removal of trees due to drain and/or sewer blockages. The concrete private walk and stairs are slightly uplifted, due to natural buttress soil displacement as the tree developed. Replacement of the walk and stairs with raised and levelled interlock is one option that would address this issue.

The homeowner indicates that subject building was constructed in 1920. Foundation walls over 80 years old, typically block, are subject to cracking and deterioration, creating an opportunity for root penetration. Previous foundation repairs, according to the homeowner, were intermittent and directed to individual leaks. Similarly clay weeping tile drains, common at the time this house was constructed, have a 60- to 80-year life expectancy.

Urban Forestry staff are available to consult with the property owner with respect to protecting the tree, should the owner decide to undertake any repairs to the foundation wall, basement floor or replacement of drains, private walk and front steps.

The subject tree is significant and a valuable part of the forest community that exists within this area. With proper care and maintenance, the tree should continue to provide benefits to the property and to the community for many years to come. Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree, due to its viable condition and contribution to the Urban Forest.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of 64-cm diameter City owned Norway maple

