

21 and 23 Mastwood Crescent (formerly Buttermill Subdivision, East Side of East Avenue) – Private Tree Removal

Date:	March 25, 2009
To:	Scarborough Community Council
From:	Richard Ubbens, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 44 – Scarborough East
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report recommends that Council approve the request for removal of five (5) privately-owned trees. The grade around the trees is to be raised by approximately one metre to address grading and drainage issues on the development site.

Inspection of the trees by staff revealed that they are in fair condition. The grading change proposed for the site will have an impact on the health of the five (5) trees. The additional soil will reduce the amount of oxygen and water that the root systems of the trees receive, resulting in a decline in their health. Urban Forestry supports the request for tree removal so that the owners of the new homes are not left with the burden of removing dead trees in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that Council approve the request for a permit to remove five (5) privately-owned trees, located at the rear of 21 and 23 Mastwood Crescent (Lots 11 and 12).

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, Private Tree Protection, Article III*, an application was submitted for a permit to remove five (5) privately-owned trees located at the rear of 21 and 23 Mastwood Crescent in the Buttermill subdivision on East Avenue.

Construction is nearing completion within the development. The grading required around the trees will result in their decline as the added soil will suffocate their root systems.

COMMENTS

An application for a permit has been received for the removal of five (5) trees having a diameter of 30cm or greater. The species involved are two willows, two Carolina poplars and one silver maple. The trees are in fair condition.

Prior to the start of development at this site, an application to destroy five other trees, located within the interior of the site was processed and a permit was issued for their removal. The five trees that are the subject of this report were originally identified by the applicant as to be protected and retained. They are located along the east perimeter of the new subdivision and were viewed as a buffer between the existing and new subdivisions.

In the latter stages of development, Urban Forestry was made aware of a grade change requirement for the site that would result in the five (5) trees that are the subject of this report requiring removal. Ideally the five (5) trees should have been dealt with at the same time as the other trees. Unfortunately, it wasn't until the houses had been constructed and framed that Urban Forestry was made aware that these trees could not be incorporated into the development of the site as originally proposed by the applicant.

The applicant has explored alternatives to the grading issue that would allow retention of the five (5) trees, including the construction of retaining walls and aeration systems. The alternatives are more expensive than re-grading the lots, and in the opinion of the applicant and his arborist, not worth the expense due to the tree species in question and that there is no guarantee the trees will survive the construction associated with these alternative methods. Construction of retaining walls, combined with aeration systems would also significantly reduce the depth and amenity space of the rear yards where the trees are located. The lots have been sold and the new owners are soon to move into these homes. If the site is re-graded and the trees are not removed now, staff are of the opinion that the new owners will be burdened with the expense of having to remove these trees in a few years time due to the impact re-grading will have on their health.

The applicant is proposing to plant 97 trees as part of the landscaping for this site, 30 of which are street trees. Some of the tree species to be planted include linden, honey locust, Freeman maple, spruce, pine and ginkgo. The overall canopy coverage in the community will increase in the long term with the tree planting proposed.

As required under *Section 813-17, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Private Tree Protection, 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. As of the date of this report, no letters of objection were received in response to the posting. If objection letters are received between now and the date of the Community Council meeting, they will be forwarded to the City Clerk for inclusion with the report.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Richard Ubbens, R.P.F.
Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Photographs of trees
Attachment 2 – Photographs of trees
Attachment 3 – Photograph of tree and excerpt from Tree Preservation Plan

Attachment 1 – Photograph indicating location in relation to existing retaining wall



33cm diameter silver maple

Attachment 2 – 30cm diameter, multi-stem willow tree



46cm diameter willow tree



A photograph of a residential yard. On the left, a portion of a red brick building is visible, featuring a white-framed window. A blue plastic bin sits on the ground near the base of the brick wall. In the center and right, a wooden fence runs across the yard. Behind the fence, several trees are visible, some with bare branches and others with sparse yellowing leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. In the background, a two-story house with light-colored siding and a dark roof is partially obscured by the trees. The ground in the foreground is covered with dry leaves and some debris.

