

DATE: 3 October, 2008

TO: Schneller, Bruce
Supervisor
UDS - Municipal Licensing and Standards

FROM: Garth Armour, Coordinator – Natural Environment
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

RE: **Natural Gardens Inspection**
Location: 137 Marilake Drive

The above noted - property was inspected by Patricia Landry of my section for potential natural garden status which is covered by Chapter 489 of the Municipal Code:

Grass & Weeds – Article 2 A. – Height Restriction, which states: “The owner or occupant of private land shall cut the grass and weeds on their land and remove the cuttings whenever the growth of grass and weeds exceeds 20 centimetres in height.”

The ‘natural garden’ exemption (**Article 2 B.**) reads as follows:

For the purposes of this section, the term “grass and weeds” shall refer to:

- 1. All noxious weeds and local weeds designated under the *Weed Control Act*; and**
- 2. Any other vegetation growth which does not form part of a natural garden that has been deliberately implemented to produce ground cover, including one or more species of wildflowers, shrubs, perennials, grasses, or combinations of them, whether native or non-native, consistent with a managed and natural landscape, other than regularly mown grass.**

Our findings are as follows:

We found this garden *not* to be within the provisions of the natural garden exemption. In order to meet the criteria of a natural garden, proper weeding and pruning must be undertaken. To be in compliance with the natural garden exemption, a garden must be consistent with a **“managed and natural landscape”**.

Findings:

- 1. A mix of shrubs and weedy understory. Invasive weeds present: Dog-strangling vine (*Vincetoxicum nigrum*), Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), Deadly nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*), Prickly lettuce (*Lactuca scariola*), Yellow avens (*Geum alepicum*) Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*).**

Maintenance required to meet the provisions of a natural garden:

1. Removal of invasive and inappropriate plants (listed above).
2. On-going weed removal and proper pruning of shrub material when required is recommended in order to comply with the requirement to be 'managed'.

Once this, or similar work is conducted, in order to qualify as a natural garden under the Grass and Weeds Chapter of the Municipal Code it must continue to be: **'consistent with a managed and natural landscape other than mown grass'**. The key term here is 'managed'.

We will be happy to conduct an additional inspection to determine if this is the case, once the homeowner has completed their work.

Garth Armour
Coordinator, Natural Environment
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

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