



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

29 Hook Avenue – Application to remove a private tree

Date:	March 25, 2009
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Richard Ubbens, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 14 – Parkdale - High Park
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report requests that Council confirm the decision of the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned silver maple tree at 29 Hook Avenue. The property owner would like to remove the tree to improve rear yard sight lines, eliminate the potential of falling limbs and reduce the risk of tree roots entering the drain pipes and/or cracking the basement floor.

Inspection of the tree by staff revealed that it is in good condition. The silver maple tree is healthy and sound based on an inspection by staff and statements in the private arborist report submitted with the application. The applicant did not provide any evidence that the tree is causing damage to the house or property and Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that Council confirm the decision of the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree at 29 Hook Avenue.

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 requesting permission to remove one (1) privately-owned tree

located at the rear of 29 Hook Avenue. The General Manager has refused the request for tree removal and the owner has appealed to the Toronto and East York Community Council.

COMMENTS

An application for a permit was received from the owner of 29 Hook Avenue for the removal of one privately-owned 114-centimetre diameter silver maple tree. The tree is located in the rear yard approximately three (3) metres from the rear wall of the house. An arborist report prepared by the property owner's arborist and included with their application, states that the large native tree is in fair condition exhibiting no significant structural or botanical weaknesses. Urban Forestry staff also inspected the tree and found it to be in good condition, with a well-developed crown and sound structure.

The owner indicated a concern with the limb that is growing over the roof of the house. Urban Forestry inspected the tree and are of the opinion that this limb is healthy and structurally sound. If tree roots are entering drain pipes or cracking the basement floor, this can be addressed without having to remove the tree. Trees do not cause damage to drains, building foundation walls, or floors, but rather gain entry through pre-existing cracks. If there is a source of water and oxygen, such as a leak from a broken drain or lack of drainage away from foundation walls, tree roots will take advantage of these conditions and grow in this environment. Drain replacement with PVC plastic piping, continuous between the building and the sanitary sewer and/or re-grading around foundation walls to allow drainage of moisture away from the foundation will alleviate the problem. It has been the policy of City Council to not approve the removal of trees due to foundation, drain and/or sewer blockages.

The property owner is proposing to plant one (1) small growing replacement tree, if a permit is issued for the removal of the silver maple tree.

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 serves to notify the community of the application and provide an opportunity for objection. Six (6) letters of objection were received in response to the posting. Two (2) of the letters are not included with the report as the authors have requested that their information not be made public.

Toronto's urban forest plays an important role in making Toronto a clean and beautiful city. Trees significantly enhance neighbourhoods and communities, improving both the quality and value of our environment. 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

Jason Kostopoulos, Urban Forestry Assistant Planner, Tel: 416 338-5067, Fax: 416 392-7277, Email: jkostop@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Photographs
Attachment 2 – Letters of Objection

Attachment 1



29 Hook Avenue – 114 centimetre diameter silver maple



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