



Parks, Forestry & Recreation  
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## Memorandum

Garth Armour  
Coordinator  
Natural Environment  
Parks, Forestry & Recreation

**DATE:** 29 September, 2009

**TO:** Romano, John  
Rizzo, Tina  
UDS - Municipal Licensing and Standards

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

**RE:** **Natural Gardens Inspection**  
**Location:** 144 Manor Road East

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 trees, shrubs, and some herbaceous perennials. Invasive weeds have been establishing themselves among the rear yard and have taken over most of the desirable plants.
2. Invasive weeds present include: *Glechoma hederacea* (Ground Ivy), *Plantago major* (Broad-leaved

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plantain), *Chenopodium album* (Lamb's Quarters), *Lactuca scariola* (Prickly Lettuce), *Solanum dulcamara* (Deadly nightshade), *Polygonum persicaria* (Lady's Thumb), Common burdock (*Arctium minus*), Nodding beggarticks (*Bidens cernua*), Smooth pigweed (*Amaranthus hybridus*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), Goldenrod (*Solidago sp.*).

3. Some trees and shrubs are in need of proper pruning to remove broken /dead / overgrown branches.

Maintenance required to meet the provisions of a natural garden:

1. Removal of invasive and inappropriate plants (listed above).
2. Proper pruning and removal of dead / broken /overgrown branches of trees and shrubs.
3. On-going weed removal and proper pruning of tree / 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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