



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

178 Bellamy Road North - Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	October 25, 2013
To:	Scarborough Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 38 – Scarborough Centre
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Cluster A\PFR\SC28-111913-AFS#18539

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately owned tree. The owner has requested tree removal due to their concerns with the proximity of the tree to their driveway and that of the adjacent property to the east, as well as falling debris from the tree.

The subject tree is a black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), measuring 55 cm in diameter, located in the front yard of the property. The tree is in good condition and, therefore, Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

The policies of the City of Toronto do not support removal of walnut trees due to falling fruit. These policies have consistently been upheld by City Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. City Council deny the application to remove the privately owned black walnut tree at 178 Bellamy Road North.

Financial Impact

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

COMMENTS

An application was received for the removal of a 55 cm diameter black walnut tree located in the front yard of 178 Bellamy Road North. The property owner is requesting tree removal due to concerns with its proximity to the driveways on either side of the tree. The owner's concern includes the slightly damaging effect of walnuts falling onto parked cars, creating small but discernible dents.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and found that it is in good condition. Black walnuts are a significant tree in the urban forest as they are a particularly long-lived species and provide good forage opportunities for local wildlife.

As required under *Section 813-19, 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 period in order to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. No comments were received.

A permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing the decision to deny the permit.

Should City Council approve this request for tree removal, in accordance with *Section 813-20 of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, approval must be conditional upon the owner providing satisfactory replacement planting. In this instance, it would be appropriate to require the applicant to provide five (5) replacement trees, in a combination of planting and cash in lieu.

Toronto's Official Plan policy 3.4.1 supports the preservation of significant trees, citing their many benefits:

- (1) To support strong communities, a competitive economy and a high quality of life, public and private city-building activities and changes to the built environment, including public works, will be environmentally friendly, based on:
 - (d) preserving and enhancing the urban forest by:
 - (i) providing suitable growing environments for trees;
 - (ii) increasing tree canopy coverage and diversity, especially of long-lived native and large shade trees; and
 - (iii) regulating the injury and destruction of trees.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They are aesthetically pleasing and soften the hard lines of built form and surfaces in an urban setting. Trees contribute to the overall character and quality of neighbourhoods. Studies suggest that social benefits such as crime reduction and neighbourhood cohesion can be directly attributable to the presence of trees.

The environmental benefits of trees include cleansing of air, noise and wind reduction, and protection from ultraviolet radiation. Trees reduce rainwater runoff thereby reducing soil erosion and lowering storm water management costs. They also contribute to moderation of temperature extremes and reduction of the urban heat island effect by providing shade during the summer.

Trees provide many economic benefits, including the enhancement of property values. Homes with mature trees have higher value when compared to similar types of homes in similar locations without trees. Mature trees are associated with reduced home energy consumption. Air conditioning costs are lower in a home shaded by trees and heating costs are reduced when trees break the winter cooling effects of wind.

Trees are a community resource, which can make the city more attractive to investors, tourists and prospective residents, thus contributing to growth and prosperity.

The policies of the City of Toronto do not support removal of walnut trees due to falling fruit. These policies have consistently been upheld by City Council.

The black walnut tree at 178 Bellamy Road North is a significant and valuable part of the urban forest. Established and healthy black walnut trees have the ability to grow to be 170 centimetres in diameter and live to be 250 years old. With proper care and maintenance this tree should continue to provide benefits to the property owner and the surrounding community for many years to come. Urban Forestry, therefore, cannot support removal of this tree.

CONTACT

Michael McClellan, Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry Branch, Tel: 416 396-5131, Fax: 416 396-4248, Email: mmcclel@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director of Urban Forestry

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Photo of 55 cm diameter black walnut tree at 178 Bellamy Road North

