

Application to Remove a Private Tree - 2 Saralou Court

Date: April 6, 2017

To: Etobicoke York Community Council

From: Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Ward 3 - Etobicoke Centre

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 2 Saralou Court. The application indicates the reasons for removal are due to concerns that the tree is growing too close to a fence, and is in declining health.

The subject tree is a Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*), measuring 58 cm in diameter. The Private Tree By-law does not support the removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 2 Saralou Court.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

There is no decision history regarding this tree removal permit application.

COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree at 2 Saralou Court. The subject tree is a Colorado blue spruce tree measuring 58 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns

that the tree is growing too close to a fence, and is in declining health due to irregular scaffold branches, production of large amounts of seed cones and an unknown condition affecting the root system.

The arborist report that accompanied the application assessed the tree to be in fair condition.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined it is healthy and in good condition, both botanically and structurally. This tree is located approximately 3.3 meters from the fence. The trunk is straight, and at the time of the inspection did not exhibit any obvious signs of significant decay. The branch attachments appear to be strong and the scaffolding growth pattern is normal. The number of seed cones produced by coniferous trees normally fluctuates from year to year. The current number of seeds produced this year is within a normal range. The unidentified condition mentioned in the submitted arborist report that is affecting the trees root system was not apparent during the inspection, however soil compaction that is typical in a residential rear yard was noted.

No evidence of any of the claims in this application were provided or visible at the time when staff inspected the tree.

When reviewing applications for tree removal, Urban Forestry staff are guided by City policies and bylaws including *City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Article III*, more commonly referred to as the Private Tree By-law. The Private Tree By-law does not have a mechanism that would allow the removal of the subject tree based on the concerns stated in the tree removal permit application.

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 in response to the posting.

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

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*, permit issuance must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is proposing to plant one (1) replacement tree. However, in this instance it would be appropriate for the applicant to provide five (5) replacement trees which can be achieved in a combination of on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of planting.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They help to 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 attributed 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 mitigate the cooling effects of wind in winter. Trees are a community resource which can make the city more attractive to investors, tourists and prospective residents thus contributing to growth and prosperity.

It is the goal of the City of Toronto to increase the City's tree canopy to 40 per cent. The loss of trees in the City due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, compounded with additional tree loss due to the presence of the Asian longhorned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The Colorado blue spruce tree at 2 Saralou Court is a valuable part of the urban forest. With proper care and maintenance this tree has the potential to provide the property owner and the surrounding community with benefits for many more years. In accordance with the City Council-approved Strategic Forest Management Plan, Toronto's Official Plan and the Tree By-law, this tree should not be removed.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director, Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Subject tree measuring 58 cm in diameter situated in the rear yard of 2 Saralou Court
Attachment 2 - Arborist Report (referencing subject tree as "Tree # 1")

Attachment 1 - Subject tree measuring 58 cm in diameter situated in the rear yard of 2 Saralou Court



Arborist Report
For **2 Saralou Court**
Toronto, Ontario



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1. Introduction

The following is an arborist report for the property at 2 Saralou Court, in Toronto Ontario. The purpose of this report was to assess the condition and location of a blue spruce tree on the property, to determine whether it should be considered for removal.

2. Methods

An on-site inspection was made on June 8, 2016. The sizes of individual trees were measured as diameter at breast height (DBH), breast height being 140 cm from ground level. From the data collected plant Condition Rating (CR), Location Rating (LR), Species Rating (SR), and minimum Tree Protection Zones (TPZ), were estimated.^{1,2}

3. Discussion

A blue spruce tree #1 would best be removed. The tree is too close to the fence, it has an irregular crown relative to the other backyard spruce trees. Possibly due to its overall condition, the tree has a heavy seed load (Table 1, Figs. 1, Photos 1 & 2).

The spruce tree is too close to the corner of the property, and a neighbour's white cedar trees. Probably due to the proximity to other trees, the tree has a poor crown form, and it has a heavy cone load (Table 1, Fig. 1).

Location Rating
50% poor

The blue spruce tree #1 has unknown root condition. Its trunk is in fair condition. The scaffold branches are irregular and the tree has a heavy seed (cone) load (Fig. 1).

Root	Trunk	Branch	Twig - Foliage	Condition Rating
6/8	6/8	3/8	3/8	18/32 = 56.25%

The Species Rating of blue spruce as set by the Ontario Chapter of the ISA is “good”.

Species Rating
71%

The blue spruce tree #1 is a not very hazardous. It is mostly branches that could fail. The trunk is unlikely to fail in the near future. If the parts failed they would mostly damage the fence, or the neighbour's white cedar (Table 1, Fig. 1).

Size	Risk	Target	Hazard Rating
1/4	2/4	2/4	5/12 = 41.7%

Replacement Trees:

The property owner would be willing to plant at least one replacement trees to the site. A new white spruce (*Picea glauca*) or white pine (*Pinus strobus*) would be appropriate species, as a replacement for the blue spruce.

The new tree would be of large calliper (50 mm) nursery grown stock. The tree would be transplanted as according to Toronto Municipal Code *Article III* tree planting instructions for transplanting burlapped or balled trees. The new tree is to be maintained in good condition. Supplemental watering may be required during the drier periods of the year, especially during the first two or three years.⁴

4. Conclusions

In my opinion, the blue spruce tree at 2 Saralou Court should be removed. The tree is too close to the fence line, and too close to a neighbour's white cedar tree. The tree has a heavy seed load, and irregular crown relative to the other two spruce trees on the site. The preservation of the tree would not be warranted.

The Application Permit fee for the blue spruce tree removal would be \$104⁹⁶. See *Application to Injure or Destroy Trees*.⁴

D. Andrew White M. Sc.



June 8, 2016

5. Tree Data

Table #1. Tree number (No.), species, diameter at breast height (DBH), status or Tree Category (TC), and comments on location & condition et cetera.

No.	Tree Species	DBH	T.C.	Comments
#1	Blue Spruce	58 cm	1	Remove tree in backyard Condition Rating: 70%
#2	Blue Spruce	47 cm	1	Retain tree in backyard Condition Rating: 70%
#3	Norway Maple <i>Acer platanoides</i>	66 cm	1	Retain front yard tree Condition Rating: 65%
#4	White Cedar <i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	42 cm	2	Neighbour's tree near property line Condition Rating: 55%
#5	Blue Spruce <i>Picea pungens</i>	34 cm	1	Tree in corner of backyard too close to neighbour's white cedar Condition Rating: 56.25%



Figure #1: The blue spruce tree #1 in the corner of the backyard of the 2 Saralou Court property that is being considered for removal.



Figure #2: The blue spruce trees #1 to #3 on the 2 Saralou Court property.



Figure #3: The Norway maple tree #5 in the front yard of the 2 Saralou Court

6. References

- 1- Council of Tree Landscape Appraisers. 2006. Guide for Plant Appraisal. 10th Edition. International Society of Arboriculture.
- 2- International Society of Arboriculture of Ontario. 2006. Ontario Supplement to Guide for Plant Appraisal 10th Edition. Ontario Chapter, International Society of Arboriculture.
- 3- City of Toronto. 2015. Urban Forestry Services. www.Toronto.Ca/trees .
- 4- City of Toronto. 2015. Tree Protection Policy and Specifications for Construction near Trees (including detail PD-101). Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation.
- 5- City of Toronto. 2015. Application to Injure or Destroy Trees. Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation.

2 Saralou Court Location Map

