

## **Application to Remove a Private Tree - 134 Yorkminster Road**

**Date:** October 23, 2017

**To:** North York Community Council

**From:** Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

**Wards:** Ward 25 - Don Valley West

### **SUMMARY**

---

This report recommends that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately owned tree located at 134 Yorkminster Road. The application indicates the reasons for removal are to address concerns that the tree is damaging an existing fence and interfering with another tree.

The subject tree is a Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), measuring 42 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 134 Yorkminster Road.

### **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 located at 134 Yorkminster Road. The subject tree is a Norway maple tree measuring 42 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns that the tree is damaging an existing fence and interfering with another tree.

The arborist report that accompanied the application did not provide an assessment of the tree's condition however the report noted that the tree was damaging the existing fence and has girdling roots. The report also outlines that the tree is close to another tree and is in competition for light.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it was healthy and maintainable both botanically and structurally. The existing fence can be repaired without requiring removal of the tree. Girdling roots are roots that grow around other roots or the main stem of a tree and can cut off or restrict the movement of water and nutrients within a tree. The subject tree had some visible girdling roots but these are small, with no apparent effect on health of the tree at this time. The adjacent tree that was perceived to have a competitive advantage was removed since the time of application due to its hazardous condition.

When reviewing applications for tree removal, Urban Forestry staff are guided by City policies and by-laws 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 in 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.

Following the permit denial the property owner submitted a second arborist report containing additional issues to support the removal request. The second arborist report described an unbalanced crown, compacted soil and that the subject tree is an invasive species. Urban Forestry staff also noted compacted soils during the inspection. Norway maple trees form a large portion of the City's urban forest and although considered an invasive species in natural areas, are also well adapted to poor soil conditions where others trees will not thrive. The formation of the unbalanced crown is a result of light competition with the tree that it grew alongside and that has since been removed. This imbalance is not considered a significant risk factor.

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 pay cash-in-lieu of planting 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 Norway maple tree at 134 Yorkminster Road 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 Private Tree By-law, this tree should not be removed.

## **CONTACT**

---

Tara Bobie, Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry  
Tel: 416-395-6134, Email: [Tara.Bobie@toronto.ca](mailto:Tara.Bobie@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Jason Doyle  
Director, Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Attachment 1 - Photograph of the Norway maple tree, located on the right, measuring 42 cm in diameter.



Attachment 1- Photograph of the Norway maple tree, located on the right, measuring 42 cm in diameter.

