

Application to Remove a Private Tree - 367 Joicey Boulevard

Date: December 8, 2017

To: North York Community Council

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

Wards: Ward 16 - Eglinton-Lawrence

SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately owned tree located at 367 Joicey Boulevard. The application indicates the removal has been requested to accommodate construction of a pool and new landscaping.

The subject tree is a honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) measuring 45 cm in diameter. The Private Tree By-Law does not support 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 367 Joicey Boulevard.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

There is no previous decision history regarding the subject tree.

COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application to remove one (1) privately owned tree located in the rear yard of 367 Joicey Boulevard. The subject tree is a honey locust measuring 45 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to accommodate construction of a pool and new landscaping.

The arborist report which accompanied the application indicates that the tree is in fair condition. The honey locust tree exhibits signs of honey locust plant bug (*Diaphnocoris chlorionis*) infestation but it is not severe as only small sections are affected. The tree has an overall lean in the direction of the existing house. The tree is structurally sound and the crown is fairly balanced. The proposed pool and landscaping requires the removal of the tree.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it was healthy and maintainable both botanically and structurally. The honey locust tree leans towards the existing house but no structural defects or signs of soil movement were identified which would indicate structural integrity is compromised. At the time of inspection Urban Forestry did not identify any defects that would indicate that the tree is likely to fail.

The tree exhibited signs of an infestation of honey locust plant bug (*Diaphnocoris chlorionis*), a common pest of honey locust trees in Toronto that feed on the leaves of these trees. This pest can cause leaf distortion, dwarf leaflets and yellow to brownish spots on host trees, but does not cause permanent dieback or decline. At the time of inspection the infestation had no visible impact on overall crown vigor. The tree had some minor deadwood which can be addressed through pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices and the performance of routine tree maintenance.

The construction of a pool as proposed would require significant encroachment into the minimum tree protection zone that would not allow the tree to survive well. No feasible options could be found to construct the pool as proposed while retaining the tree; however, the tree could be retained by adjusting the location or size of the proposed pool such that the minimum tree protection zone for this tree could be implemented.

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, Trees, 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.

Following the permit denial the property owner submitted an email with additional photos to support the removal request. The email indicated that the honey locust tree drips sap that has damaged the existing deck such that it cannot be repaired.

The dripping substance that was identified as a concern is more likely to be honeydew than tree sap. Honeydew is a sticky liquid that drips from leaves and branches and is produced by the sap-sucking insects, including the nymphs of honey locust bugs. Dripping sap or honeydew was not observed at time of inspection, however, the perceived nuisance from dripping sap or honeydew is not a reason to remove a healthy tree. There are specific management practices available such as use of a high-pressure spray of water to dislodge the bugs from the tree.

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 approval must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the original application is proposing to provide cash-in-lieu payment for three (3) replacement trees. However, in this instance, it would be appropriate for the owner 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 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 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. 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 percent. 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 honey locust tree at 367 Joicey Boulevard 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

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SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director, Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the honey locust tree measuring 45 cm in diameter
Attachment 2 - The site plan for the proposed pool at 367 Joicey Boulevard

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the honey locust tree measuring 45 cm in diameter



Attachment 2 - The site plan for the proposed pool at 367 Joicey Boulevard

