

Application to Remove a City Tree - 220 St. Germain Avenue

Date: October 23, 2019

To: North York Community Council

From: Director, Urban Forestry, Parks Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Ward 08 - Eglinton Lawrence

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny a request for a permit to remove one (1) City-owned tree located on the road allowance in front of the property located at 220 St Germain Avenue. The owner is requesting permission to remove the tree due to damage and nuisance to the driveway and vehicle(s) caused by the tree's fruit.

The subject tree is a Turkish hazel (*Corylus colurna*) measuring 42 cm in diameter. The Tree By-law does not support removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable and growing in an appropriate location.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) City-owned tree located at 220 St. Germain Avenue.

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 to remove one (1) City-owned tree located on the road allowance in front of 220 St Germain Avenue. The subject tree is a Turkish hazel measuring 42 cm in diameter. The owner has submitted an application to remove the tree due to damage and nuisance to the driveway and vehicle(s) caused by the tree's fruit.

Urban Forestry staff have inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined it is healthy and in good condition both botanically and structurally. Among other things trees drop fruit and provide food for wildlife. The Tree By-law does not support tree removal to address the perceived nuisance resulting from a tree's natural functions. Moreover, tree care and cleanup is considered part of performing routine property maintenance and is a responsibility of all property owners within the City of Toronto.

In 2010, an application to remove the subject tree was approved in principle following involvement by the local Councillor. However the requirements to proceed with the removal were never met and the matter was closed without removal of the tree. A second application requesting the removal of the tree has been denied by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing this decision.

Should City Council approve the request for permission to remove this City-owned tree, in accordance with *Section 813-10.B of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article II*, permit issuance must be conditional upon the owner/applicant providing payment of the appraised value of the tree (in this case \$5,048.00), the owner/applicant agreeing to remove or have the tree removed at their sole expense, and the owner/applicant providing satisfactory replacement planting. In this instance, based on Urban Forestry's compensation policy, five (5) replacement trees for each tree removed should be required, which can be achieved through a combination of on-site planting and the submission of cash-in-lieu of planting. The owner/applicant will be required to provide a tree planting guarantee for each new tree to be planted on City property, the per tree amount being equal to the City's known cost of planting and maintaining a new shade tree for two years.

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, quality and enjoyment of neighbourhoods. Studies suggest that social benefits such as crime reduction and neighbourhood cohesion can be directly 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 percent by 2050. Impacts on the tree canopy in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, the Asian long horned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*), and the emerald ash borer (*Agilus planipennis*), make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now, than ever.

The Turkish Hazel tree in front of 220 St. Germain Avenue is a valuable part of the urban forest. With proper care and maintenance this tree may 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/Ravine 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 – Figure 1: Staff photograph of City-owned Turkish hazel measuring 42 cm in diameter, 2019.

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