

Ryan Rolfe

Forestry data collector, Tree Protection and Plan Review – South
Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry & Recreation
50 Booth Ave, 2nd Floor
rrolfe@toronto.ca
416-688-3262

August 29, 2019

Dear Ryan:

Please accept this letter as a professional opinion in support of removing 5 Norway Maples in the rear interior courtyard of 801 King Street West.

The trees in question are **Acer Platanoides – Norway Maple**. Those 21 emails in support of keeping them are correct that they are large and appear healthy, however, I would note the following list of liabilities associated with them and the longer list of benefits that would be gained by replacing them :

Norway Maple Liabilities

- 1) They are surface rooting and potentially damaging to the garage roof membranes and structural concrete slabs that exist beneath them. In my experience, Norway Maples that exist above underground garages eventually cause breakdown of the protective membrane and eventually the concrete beneath that. This will pose a significant future cost liability for Citysphere Condos.
- 2) The foliage habit of the tree is such that dense shade is cast beneath them. This prevents shrubs and perennials from growing and as they get larger can begin the decline and death of such plant materials. Also, the surface rooting habit robs nutrients and moisture from those plant materials.
- 3) As Norway Maples age their limbs and branches become weak. This weak wooded characteristic is then prone to splitting and falling during wind storms. As monsoonal rains and wind storms appear to be the new normal the chances of damage to Citysphere balconies, ground-level landscaping and parked vehicles will definitely increase over time.
- 4) Norway Maples are prone to verticillium wilt, anthracnose and leaf scorch development on the foliage which makes the overall appearance of the tree quite unsightly by mid-summer.
- 5) The fall colour is an uninspiring yellow and not considered valuable
- 6) Currently, the City of Toronto is removing Norway Maples from ravines throughout the City. They are considered an invasive and damaging species in ravines as well as on streets and courtyards.

Benefits with Replacements

The replacement trees in question could include Quercus Palustris – Pin Oak or Acer Freemanii – Freeman Maple. Choice of species will be according to the City ultimately and one that will not harm the

garage slab underneath. It is feasible to install the trees at 60-70 mm caliper trunk size or as large as 100 mm caliper trunk size. I would recommend for a combination of species and perhaps sizes. In any event foliage will be up to the height of second floor balconies in the first year with 60-70 mm calliper size and 3rd floor with 100 mm caliper size.



At the Nursery 60- 70 mm Caliper Trunk Diam, **Quercus Palustris – Pin Oak**



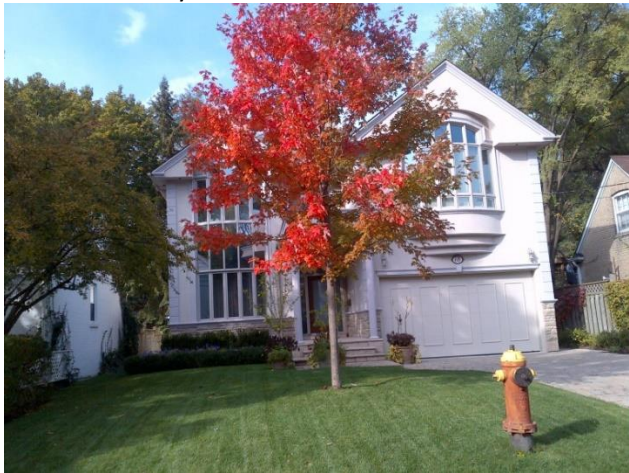
Same Trees in a group of (4) After Planting – Height is up to second story. Height would reach to the equivalent of a 3rd story, 2 years following planting

Benefits of the Pink Oak:

- 1) Strong Wooded Horizontal branching habit- looks very attractive in the winter months. A classic!
- 2) Stunning glossy green foliage in summer and vibrant fall colour and better at attracting urban wildlife



Acer Freemanii- Freeman Maple- 100 mm caliper trunk size day after planting. Reaches to the 2nd almost 3rd story



Acer Freemanii- Freeman Maple- 100 mm caliper trunk size two years after planting. Reaches to the equivalent of the 3rd, easily 4th story

Benefits to the Freeman Maple

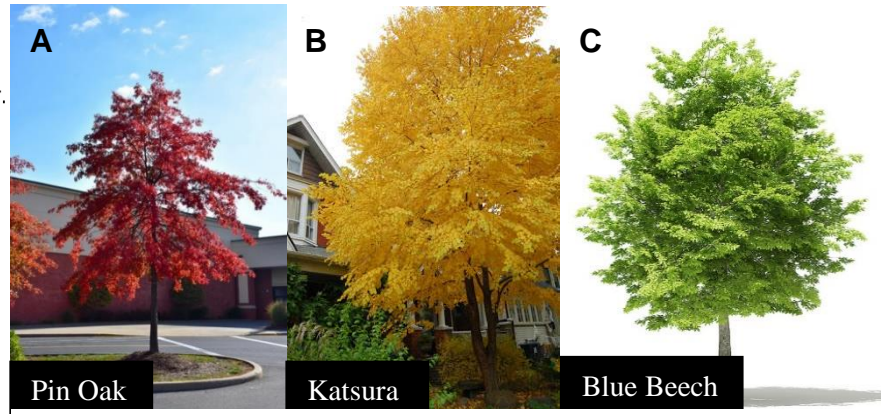
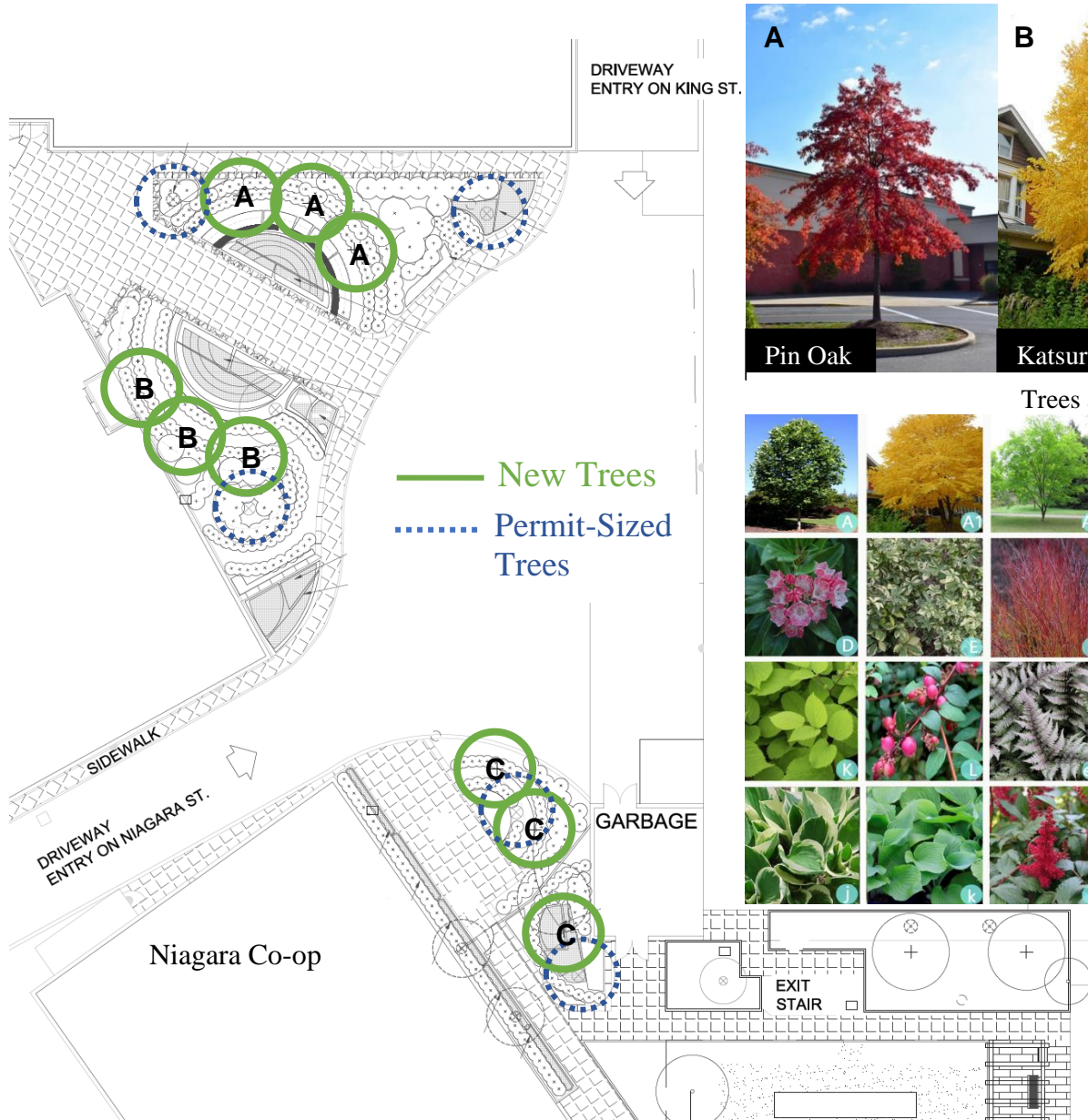
- 1) Faster growth rate than Pin Oak- can reach a significant height in time
- 2) Strong wooded, less invasive root system than Norway Maple
- 3) Stunning fall colour, attractive smooth bark. Some Freeman Maples already exist in the Courtyard.

I trust that the liabilities associated with keeping the Norway Maples and the benefits of replacing them will be taken into full consideration while reviewing this appeal.

Best Regards,

Kent W Ford, BLA, CLD

COURTYARD PHASE-1A LANDSCAPING PROJECT



Trees and Plants Selections



CITYSPHERE COURTYARD RENOVATION



**Councillor Joe Cressy**

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West, Suite C53
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor Cressy,

We are writing to you on behalf of Metropolitan Condominium Corporation (MTCC) No. 961 which represents 312 units at Citysphere on 801 King Street West and 26 townhouses on Wellington Street West and Tecumseth Place. Our property is also a shared community that has reciprocal agreements with Gotham Lofts (54 units) and Niagara Co-op (62 units).

As you may be aware, we have undertaken a substantial property upgrade project with the help of a landscape architect, *Kent Ford Design Group*, as well as a professional arborist, *Central Tree Care Ltd.* This project involves repair of ageing hardscape and as well as replacement of the irrigation system and lighting. We strongly believe in creating a usable green space for our residents and, as such, have also included significant landscaping upgrades, which will be completed in phases — the area involved in the current phase is highlighted blue in Appendix 1 for ease of reference. On recommendation of our consultants, these upgrades include removal of 5 large Norway Maple trees, which require permit approval from the City of Toronto (Appendix 2).

Following due process, we applied for permits to remove these trees but were unfortunately denied as they are considered to be “healthy” trees. However, we disagree with this decision and ask for reconsideration for the following reasons:

1. We do not take the removal of these trees lightly. We carefully examined the pros and cons of this matter and proceeded based on the **expert opinion** of our landscape architect and arborist. It was, in fact, our arborist that initiated the permit process for these trees.
2. The primary purpose of removing these trees is a proactive measure to **protect** the underlying waterproofing membrane and concrete slabs from **damage** caused by the weight of the large trees and their invasive root systems.

We are already experiencing **leaks** in our parking garage as a result of deficiencies in the ageing membrane and are spending several hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair the defects in order to extend the life of the membrane. Based on an assessment from our engineer, the working life of this infrastructure is nearing its end but can possibly be extended with proactive measures — a significant **cost savings** for our residents.

3. Norway Maples, the types of tree in question, is listed as an **invasive species** by the City of Toronto.



4. Norway Maples are **actively removed** by the City of Toronto in other areas.
5. Norway Maples have **girdling roots** that have both mechanical and ecosystem impacts to the surrounding area (Appendix 3).
6. Aging Norway Maples have weakening of their branches, which can break and fall during storms — a **safety hazard**.
7. The Norway Maples on our property have created a zone of dense shade, which creates an **unsurvivable environment** for plants beneath them (Appendix 4).
8. Norway Maples are prone to **diseases** such as verticillium wilt, anthracnose and leaf scorch. This leads to an unsightly view for our residents.
9. Norway Maples have foliage that is **not appealing** from a landscape and enjoyment perspective.
10. The report from the arborist lists the condition of these trees as only “**fair**” and not “good” or “healthy.”
11. As part of our intention to creating a new green space, we have committed to planting **nine (9) new trees** in the current phase of our landscaping project alone with additional trees to be planted as we progress. Please see Appendix 5 for a depiction of our plans.

These new trees will be in the largest diameter available to have **maximum impact** to compensate for removed trees. Three different native species will be replacing a single species of invasive tree to offer more diverse interests and a better habitat for birds and urban wildlife.

12. We understand the concern with removing **seemingly healthy** and large trees from any property. We also understand there was opposition voiced during the review process, which is not at all unexpected in any consultation process. Nevertheless, those expressing disagreement may not be residents of Citysphere and certainly do not have an understanding of the expert opinions, structural concerns or green space revitalization plan that we are privy to.

In light of the facts presented, we respectfully disagree with the decision made by our colleagues at Urban Forestry and ask for City Council to allow the issuance of a permit to remove the trees. The residents we mutually represent have both financial and liveability interests that rest on this decision.



Additional correspondence from our expert consultants will be forthcoming to further highlight our position on this matter. Thank you for your attention in reviewing this important issue on behalf of your constituents.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Dipen Thakrar
Secretary, Board of Directors, MTCC 961

Copies:

Kent Ford Design Group
Central Tree Care Ltd.
Urban Forestry, City of Toronto