

NOTICE OF MOTION**Investigation of removal of City Tree adjacent to 81 Twenty Fourth Street in Ward 6****Moved by: Councillor****Mark Grimes**

Summary:

A local resident at is requesting the removal of a city tree located on the right of way adjacent to her property at 81 Twenty Fourth St, in Ward 6.

Over the last few years the tree has become home to an ever increasing flock of Starlings. The Starling is not a bird native to Canada. Starlings drive native birds out of their territory and the homeowner has observed fewer types of other birds near her home than used to be seen in the neighbourhood. Starlings are well noted for their flocking habits, and the homeowner has seen increasing numbers nesting in the tree each year. The number of starlings is now creating a huge nuisance roosting next to her home.

The number of birds is overwhelming the home owner. There is large scale build-up of feces from this flock in the yard and on the home of the resident. The homeowner has concerns regarding the damage to the plants in the yard and has been advised that the feces and urine can lead to structural damage of the house, as uric acid in the feces will corrode stone, metal and masonry. The bacteria, fungal agents and parasites in the feces are posing a serious health risk. As well the Starling nest in the tree cavity is accumulating material that is unsightly and could represent a fire hazard, because Starlings do not remove material from old nests but keep adding year after year to what is there. The nest is used in successive seasons and smells foul.

Starlings are very difficult to get rid of, as they will return to the old nesting site each year, in increasing numbers. The homeowner has attempted various methods of deterring the birds from nesting in the area to no avail.

The homeowners neighbour across the street, in spite of numerous requests, continues to feed the birds, making it more difficult to discourage them from nesting in the area, and attracting more birds.

Public Health and Urban Forestry Staff have both visited the site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Etobicoke York Community Council request Staff from Urban Forestry and Public Health to further investigate the issues raised by the homeowner and provide a report and recommendation to the next meeting of the Etobicoke York Community Council.

Date: June 9, 2009