

34 Aldgate Avenue – Private Tree Removal

Date:	April 27, 2010
To:	Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Richard Ubbens, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 5 – Etobicoke-Lakeshore
Reference Number:	P:/2010/Cluster A/PFR/EY37-052510-AFS#12053

SUMMARY

The report requests that City Council deny the request to remove a privately-owned tree, located at 34 Aldgate Avenue. The applicant has requested permission to remove the tree to accommodate the construction of a new garage.

The tree in question is a 98 cm diameter black walnut in good condition. With proper care and maintenance, the tree should continue to provide benefits to the community for many years, and should be included in any plans involving replacement of the existing garage structure. Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree due to its viable condition.

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 at 34 Aldgate Avenue.

Financial Impact

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

COMMENTS

An application was received from the owner of 34 Aldgate Avenue, requesting permission to remove one (1) 98 cm diameter, privately-owned, black walnut tree.

An inspection of the tree by staff found it to be in good condition, with excellent crown development and well-formed buttress flare suggesting good stability. The black walnut

is located in the rear yard adjacent to a single-car garage. The applicant has stated that the tree has caused structural damage to the existing garage, based on its proximity to the structure, and requests permission to remove the tree to accommodate the construction of a new garage.

As required under *Section 813-17, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a 'Public Notice' sign was posted on the subject property for the minimum 14-day posting period. The posting serves to notify the community of the applicant's intention to remove the tree and provide an opportunity for objection to the application. Three (3) letters of objection to the removal of the tree were received in response to the posting.

The damage to the garage cannot be attributed to the tree alone. Although root development beneath a concrete slab can cause lifting and cracking, there are other forces impacting the structure. The garage is approximately 50 years old and fractures in concrete slabs of this age are common.

Maintaining the tree by pruning would reduce its impact on the garage. Raising the lower portion of the crown away from the roof will reduce the potential for roof and shingle damage caused by branches rubbing against the garage. Pruning the tree for deadwood will also reduce the number of branches that fall onto the garage structure.

Urban Forestry would not object to the construction of a new garage with a new concrete slab on the same footprint as the existing garage. Any replacement garage should allow for the protection and retention of the black walnut tree.

The applicant has indicated that three replacement trees will be planted if permission is granted to allow the removal of the black walnut tree.

Black walnut trees have the ability to grow up to 170 cm in diameter and live to be 250 years old with proper care. This tree should continue to provide benefits to the owner and the community for years to come and should be incorporated into any plans for the construction of a replacement garage. Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree due to its viable condition and contribution to the urban forest.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Richard Ubbens
Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment No. 1 – Photograph of black walnut tree

Attachment No. 2 – Letters of objection

Attachment No. 1

