STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Request for a Natural Garden Exemption to the Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 489 - Grass and Weeds at 175 Geoffrey Street

Date: January 31, 2011
To: Toronto and East York Community Council
From: Municipal Licensing and Standards Division, Toronto and East York District
Wards: Ward 14 – Parkdale High Park
Reference Number: IBMS No. 10-218673

SUMMARY

This staff report is about a matter for which the Toronto and East York Community Council has delegated authority from City Council to make a final decision. The applicant, being the property owner, is seeking exemption to the provisions of the City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 489 Grass and Weeds, Section 489-3E on the basis that the growth is exempt as a natural garden.

The Grass and Weeds By-law provides that the owner or occupant of private land shall cut the grass and weeds on their land and remove the cuttings whenever the growth of grass and weeds exceeds 20 centimetres in height. The subject property has plant growth in excess of 20 centimetres in both the front and rear yard areas for which the owner has applied for relief to be exempted as a natural garden.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Municipal Licensing & Standards recommends that the Toronto and East York Community Council grant the natural garden exemption for 175 Geoffrey Street, with the condition that proper weeding and pruning must be undertaken and cancel the Notice of Violation.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact anticipated in this report.
DECISION HISTORY

In response to a Notice of Violation issued for Long Grass and Weeds the property owner submitted a letter requesting that a review be conducted with a view to designate the front and rear yard areas as a natural garden. The City of Toronto Natural Environment Specialist attended the property and an assessment of the area complied with the provisions of the natural garden exemption. See Attachment 3.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In response to a Notice of Violation issued for Long Grass and Weeds the property owner submitted a letter requesting that a review be conducted with a view to designate the front and rear yard areas as a natural garden. The property was attended by a City of Toronto Natural Resource Specialist. The Natural Resource Specialist’s assessment of the areas found the areas to be within the provisions of the natural garden exemption.

COMMENTS

Should the request for an exemption be approved, a condition of approval should include proper weeding and pruning must be undertaken. The area consists of a mix of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants. Plantings include: Peonies, Rose of Sharon, Forsythia, Phlox, Roses, Sedum, Oregano, Spiderwort, Comfrey, Mint, Hibiscus, Hosta, Weigelia, Cedar, Lilac, Hemlock, Spirea, Honeysuckle.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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Elizabeth Glibbery, Manager
Toronto and East York District

ATTACHMENTS

1. Photograph, front yard
2. Photograph, rear yard
3. Natural Environment Report