



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Request to designate 45 Cockburn Drive as a Natural Garden

Date:	September 14, 2012
To:	Scarborough Community Council
From:	Bill Blakes, Manager, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Scarborough.
Wards:	Ward 44. Scarborough East
Reference Number:	IBMS 12-229822

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to consider a request by the owner(s) of 45 Cockburn Drive to be exempt from the requirements of the Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 489 – Grass and Weeds, section 489-2. The section states that the maximum height of grass and / or weeds cannot exceed 20 centimetres. This report is an exemption request in accordance with Chapter 489, Grass and Weeds, section-3(E)(6) to have the yard(s) at 45 Cockburn Drive designated a Natural Garden, as follows:

- (6) An owner or occupant requesting a review of a notice, and any other interested person, shall be heard by the Community Council which may:
- (a) If the land is located in the geographic area of one Community Council, under delegated authority
 - (1) Grant the exemption, with or without conditions, and cancel the notice; or
 - (2) Confirm the notice and direct that a second notice be given under this section.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Parks, Forestry and Recreation-Natural Environments, states that in their expert opinion, the location known as 45 Cockburn Drive does not meet the provisions to be considered as a natural garden. Therefore, Municipal Licensing and Standards recommends that the exemption not be granted.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact anticipated in this report.

DECISION HISTORY

As the result of a complaint regarding long grass and weeds and subsequent inspection by a Municipal Standards Officer, a notice of violation was issued to the owner(s) of 45 Cockburn Drive. The notice of violation applied to all yard areas and these areas remain uncut. The owner(s) have requested by letter to Municipal Licensing and Standards an natural garden exemption for the property.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

A complaint from the public reported grass and weeds in excess of 20 centimetres at 45 Cockburn Drive. A notice of violation was issued and not complied with. The owner(s) of 45 Cockburn Drive submitted a letter requesting an exemption for a natural garden. In accordance with Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 489, Grass and Weeds, section 489-3(E)(5), a report on the natural was requested from Patricia Landry, special projects, Parks, Forestry and recreation-Natural Environments. The recommendation for refusal is based entirely on the e-mailed report from Ms. Landry dated September 10, 2012

CONTACT

Bill Blakes, Manager, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Scarborough District,
Tel: 416-396-8221

SIGNATURE

Bill Blakes, Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Report from Parks, Forestry and Recreation-Natural Environment.
2. Photograph of 45 Cockburn Drive.

Attachment 1

Hi Bill,

I have been out to inspect the above noted property again this season and it is not in compliance with the natural garden exemption. The plant material is growing out over the public sidewalk, impeding pedestrians passing by. There are several invasive weeds growing and need to be removed in order for it to be in compliance with the natural garden exemption.

These include:

Thistle

Prickly Lettuce

Pigweed

Garlic Mustard

Manitoba maple

I have, in the past, met with the homeowner at this property and gone through the plants that require removal and the maintenance required. I would be happy to meet with the homeowner again to discuss this.

Part of the expectation with a natural garden exemption is there must be regular maintenance performed for the ongoing removal and control of weeds and pruning as required. Ongoing maintenance and upkeep is essential.

Best regards,

Patricia

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