STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED

571 Dundas Street West, 21/21a, 23/23a, 91 Augusta Avenue, 73-75 Augusta Square and 20 Vanauley Street – Request for a Permit to Remove Trees

Date:     August 17, 2012
To:       Toronto and East York Community Council
From:     Jim Hart, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:    Ward 20 – Trinity-Spadina
Reference Number: P:\2012\Cluster A\PFR\TE18-091112-AFS#16180

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide information on trees located on City and private lands that will be impacted by the redevelopment of the Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation.

In order to redevelop the Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative, numerous trees will need to be removed. Trees will require removal to accommodate demolition of existing buildings, and the installation of new roads and infrastructure. It is anticipated that some trees can be retained and protected where existing buildings are to remain, as well as in park blocks. The final details of possible tree protection and tree removal are not yet known since park blocks and building footprints have not yet been determined. This redevelopment is being planned in phases, and tree issues will be considered during each phase of the planning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to collect fees for the tree removal application based on the proportion of gross floor area in the new development dedicated to market value, and to defer payment of the fees until the proportion of the development composed of non-profit housing is determined for 571 Dundas Street West, 21/21a. 23/23a, 91 Augusta Avenue, 73-75 Augusta Square and 20 Vanauley Street.
Financial Impact
There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY
At its meeting of July 11, 12 and 13, 2012, City Council, through the report, "Final Report - 571 Dundas Street West, 21, 21a, 23, 23a, 73-75 and 91 Augusta Avenue, 73-75 Augusta Square and 20 Vanauley Street - Official Plan Amendment," approved an Official Plan Amendment for redevelopment of the Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative. Among other things, Council requested the Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry Division to report to the September 11, 2012 meeting of Toronto East York Community Council on the application to remove private trees on the site.
Item TE17.7: http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.TE17.7

ISSUE BACKGROUND
Toronto Community Housing Corporation has submitted the necessary applications to City Planning for the revitalization of the Alexandra Park Apartments and Atkinson Housing Co-operative. The revitalization proposes to demolish and replace 333 townhouse and apartment units, refurbish and retain 473 apartment units, the addition of 1,540 market units, and the introduction of retail uses on the ground floor. The revitalization also proposes an extended public street network and two new public parks. In order to accomplish the above, Parks, Forestry and Recreation has been advised that it will be necessary to remove up to 358 trees from public and private properties.

COMMENTS
The site currently has an inventory of eight (8) City-owned street trees and 710 trees on private property having a diameter of 30 cm or greater, which are protected under the Private Tree By-law. An Arborist Report provided by the applicant has identified the need to remove up to eight (8) street trees and up to approximately 350 private trees, two of which are located on neighbouring properties. The request has been made in association with redevelopment of the Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative, to be completed in two (2) phases over a number of years. The exact number of trees requiring removal cannot be determined until further in the planning process.

City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Article III, §813-12 B(1)(a) provides an exemption to the Toronto Community Housing Corporation from paying application fees for the removal of trees on private property.

Consistent with previous developments, such as the redevelopment of Regent Park, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division recommends that City Council exempt Toronto Community Housing Corporation from paying any application fees for the proportion of gross floor area in the development that is dedicated to non-profit housing. However, Parks, Forestry and Recreation is recommending that fees for street and private tree removal applications based on the gross floor area of market value housing be collected. Since this information has not yet been provided, staff further recommend that payment
of fees be deferred until the proportion of the development to be dedicated as non-profit housing can be calculated.

The proposal includes removal of trees from the entire Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative property although the proposed tree removal will only take place as and when the phases of redevelopment progress. At the beginning of each of the two phases, the applicant will be required to evaluate and provide a current inventory of the trees that will be impacted in that phase of development. The applicant will be required to identify healthy trees that can be incorporated into the redevelopment and tree protection measures will be determined to the satisfaction of Urban Forestry with a view to maximizing preservation.

**Tree Planting**
Approximately 500 replacement trees are proposed for planting on the street allowance and within the Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative property. Urban Forestry staff are working with the applicant to ensure that trees proposed for planting are of appropriate species and that adequate soil volume and air space are provided to permit them to grow to maturity. A diverse list of tree species is being prepared, and will include predominantly large growing, long-lived, native trees. Additional tree planting will take place in the new parks that will form part of the redevelopment.

**Tree Application Fees**
As noted above, Toronto Community Housing Corporation is exempted from paying application fees for the removal of trees on private property. However, Parks, Forestry and Recreation is recommending that fees for street and private tree removal applications based on the gross floor area of market value housing be collected. Payment of fees should be made at such time as each phase of the development proceeds and as trees need to be removed or injured to permit construction.

**Public Notification**
"A Notice" of Application to remove private trees has not been posted. A "Notice" will be posted for the required 14 day period once a complete application has been received, including fees.

**Conclusion**
The Toronto Community Housing Corporation is seeking to improve the quality of life for the residents of the Alexandra Park/Atkinson Housing Co-operative. In order to achieve this goal the existing tree population will undergo change involving the removal of a large number of the existing trees as well as planting replacement trees wherever possible including on the newly created City street allowances, and in parks.

Urban Forestry supports the development proposed for this site in principle, with the understanding that a large number of trees require removal to accommodate redevelopment. Staff will work closely with the applicant with respect to protecting existing trees that have been identified as significant based on their species, size and condition. Staff will also work to ensure that satisfactory replacement tree planting is
secured through the development review process. Emphasis will be placed on providing large growing, long-lived trees with adequate growing conditions, including sufficient soil volume and air space.

**CONTACT**
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**SIGNATURE**

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Jim Hart
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division