STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

454 Sammon Avenue – Application to Remove a Private Tree

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<th>Date:</th>
<th>December 2, 2013</th>
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<td>To:</td>
<td>Toronto and East York Community Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>From:</td>
<td>Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation</td>
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<td>Ward:</td>
<td>Ward 29 – Toronto - Danforth</td>
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<td>Reference Number:</td>
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SUMMARY

This report recommends that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately owned tree. The application indicates the reason for removal is that the property owner wishes to change the species of tree in their front yard.

The subject tree is a Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) measuring 42 cm in diameter, located in the front yard of the property. The tree is healthy and in good condition; therefore, Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove the privately owned Colorado blue spruce tree at 454 Sammon Avenue.

Financial Impact

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

COMMENTS

An application was received from the owner of 454 Sammon Avenue for a permit to remove a 42 cm diameter privately owned Colorado blue spruce tree located in the front yard of the subject property. The application indicates the reason for removal is that the
property owner would like to plant an American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), a more desirable species in their opinion.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and found that it is healthy and in good condition structurally and botanically. The canopy is full with no signs of dieback and no visible exterior deadwood. There is minimal internal deadwood within the canopy caused by shading. Old pruning wounds have calloused over with little or no sap drainage. There are no obvious signs of decay, cavities, or structural weaknesses.

As required under Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III, a Notice of application sign was posted on the subject property for the minimum 14 day period in order to provide an opportunity for comments by the community. No comments were received in response to the notice.

A permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing the decision to deny the permit.

Should City Council approve this request for tree removal, in accordance with Section 813-20 of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article III, approval must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the property owner is proposing to plant a 50 mm caliper American beech. In this instance, it would be appropriate to require the applicant to provide ten (10) replacement trees, in a combination of planting and cash in lieu.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They are aesthetically pleasing and soften the hard lines of built form and surfaces in an urban setting. Trees contribute to the overall character and quality of neighbourhoods. Studies suggest that social benefits such as crime reduction and neighbourhood cohesion can be directly attributable to the presence of trees.

The environmental benefits of trees include cleansing of air, noise and wind reduction, and protection from ultraviolet radiation. Due to the large surface area of their needles, coniferous trees are particularly good at improving air quality by filtering harmful dust and pollutants such as ozone, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide from the air. Trees reduce rainwater runoff thereby reducing soil erosion and lowering storm water management costs. They also contribute to moderation of temperature extremes and reduction of the urban heat island effect by providing shade during the summer.

Trees provide many economic benefits, including the enhancement of property values. Homes with mature trees have higher value when compared to similar types of homes in similar locations without trees. Mature trees are associated with reduced home energy consumption. Air conditioning costs are lower in a home shaded by trees and heating costs are reduced when trees break the winter cooling effects of wind. Coniferous trees also provide aesthetics during the winter months when deciduous trees are leafless.
Trees are a community resource, which can make the city more attractive to investors, tourists and prospective residents, thus contributing to growth and prosperity.

The Colorado blue spruce tree at 454 Sammon Avenue is a valuable part of the urban forest. With proper care and maintenance this tree has the potential to provide the property owner and the surrounding community with benefits for many years to come. Urban Forestry cannot support removal of this tree.

CONTACT
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SIGNATURE

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Jason Doyle
Director of Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 – Photo of the 42 cm diameter Colorado blue spruce tree situated in the front yard of 454 Sammon Avenue.
42 cm diameter Colorado blue spruce fronting 454 Sammon Avenue