

Leaside Property Owners Association Incorporated

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December 7 2015

Marilyn Toft
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Email: clerk@toronto.ca

RE: City Council Dec 9 2015: PE8.5 – Revisions to the Tree By-laws

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of City Council,

On Monday, November 23, 2015, the Parks and Environment Committee approved revisions to the City's tree by-laws, without notice and without representations from members of the public.

We have a number of comment and concerns about this item/report (which amends Chapters 658 and 813 of the City's Municipal Code):

- The overall substantive and comprehensive nature of the revisions proposed would normally require consultation, notice and an opportunity to make representations.
- The request for further delegation from Council to injure and destroy trees that are healthy or would otherwise be protected is of concern.
- The amended process of deciding to injure or destroy healthy private trees will become more uneven with the proposed elimination of the notice of intent from 14 days to 0 days along with the removal of consultation with the local Councillor.
- The new processes being introduced lack clarity and are not properly disclosed for review; recommending such changes as revisions to the tree by-laws is premature.
- Applications to injure or destroy healthy private trees whether defined as "boundary" or "neighbour" under the new broadly defined term "as of right" will diminish the protection rights of all property owners whose mature trees are abutting or near the lot lines of those developments.

· Urban Forestry's goal of objectivity and neutrality in rendering opinion on protecting, injuring or destroying trees under the "as of right" decision-making process will be severely diminished.

Trees play an important environmental role and are critical to the character of many areas of the City. This is also recognized in the Official Plan. In addition, the revised tree by-laws appear to conflict with the City's goal to ensure the tree canopy is maintained.

We recommend that City Council at its Dec 9 meeting refer the Revisions to the Tree By-laws back to the Parks and Environment Committee as a deputation item to be held after notice has been given to all affected persons including resident and ratepayer groups, tree preservation groups, environment groups and naturalist groups.

We appreciate the "heads up" by CORRA on this item.

Thank you for your consideration.

Geoff Kettel

Geoff Kettel and Carol Burtin Fripp
Co-Presidents

c.c. CORRA