

**42 Lothian Avenue – Application to Remove a Private Tree**

<b>Date:</b>	September 14, 2015
<b>To:</b>	Etobicoke York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 5 – Etobicoke - Lakeshore
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2015\Cluster A\PFR\EY09-090615-AFS#21783

**SUMMARY**

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This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 42 Lothian Avenue. The owner is requesting removal of this tree to address concerns that the tree is unsightly and may be unsafe due to a slight lean.

The subject tree is a white spruce (*Picea glauca*) measuring 33 cm in diameter, located in the rear yard of 42 Lothian Avenue. Urban Forestry does not support removal of this tree as it is healthy, maintainable and growing in an appropriate location.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 42 Lothian Avenue.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

## COMMENTS

An application was received from the property owner for a permit to remove two (2) privately owned trees located on the north side of the rear yard at 42 Lothian Avenue. The subject trees are two white spruce trees measuring 32 cm and 33 cm in diameter. The reason for tree removal identified on the application submitted by the owner is concerns that the slight phototropic lean is unsightly, dangerous and renders the trees unsafe.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the white spruce tree measuring 32 cm in diameter and determined that it was in poor condition. Therefore, in accordance with *Section 813-16. A., of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, on May 21, 2015, a permit was issued authorizing removal of this tree.

Urban Forestry staff also inspected the white spruce tree measuring 33 cm in diameter and found it to be healthy and good condition both structurally and botanically. The tree is exhibiting a slight lean due to a phototropic growth pattern. Phototropism is a natural growth pattern whereby plants grow toward available light. The lean observed is not impacting the structural integrity of the tree and is a response to competition from nearby trees. There is no evidence of heaving or other root damage that would be indicative of potential tree failure. The tree's root system appears healthy and has grown to support the slight lean. At the time of inspection Urban Forestry did not identify any defects that would indicate that the tree is likely to fail.

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 required 14 day period in order to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. No comments were received.

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

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 owner is proposing to plant one (1) replacement tree. However, in this instance it would be appropriate for the owner to provide five (5) replacement trees, which can be achieved in a combination of planting on site and cash-in-lieu of planting.

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 attributed to the presence of trees.

The environmental benefits of trees include cleansing of air, noise and wind reduction, and protection from ultraviolet radiation. 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 mitigate the cooling effects of wind in winter. Trees are a community resource, which can make the city more attractive to investors, tourists and prospective residents, thus contributing to growth and prosperity.

It is the goal of the City of Toronto to increase the city's tree canopy to 40 percent by 2050. Impacts on the tree canopy in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, the Asian long-horned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The white spruce tree at 42 Lothian 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 more years. Urban Forestry, therefore does not support removal of this tree.

## **CONTACT**

Max Dida, Supervisor, Tree Protection & Plan Review, Urban Forestry  
Tel: 416-394-8551, Fax: 416-338-6596, Email: [mdida@toronto.ca](mailto:mdida@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Jason Doyle  
Director of Urban Forestry

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the 33 diameter white spruce tree in the rear yard of 42 Lothian Avenue.

