



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

2 Waterbury Drive– Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	October 22, 2015
To:	Etobicoke York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 4 – Etobicoke Centre
Reference Number:	P:\2015\Cluster A\PFR\EY10-111015-AFS#22025

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 2 Waterbury Drive. The application indicates the reason for the removal request is the location of the tree and to address concerns that the tree and its root system will cause structural damage to the house.

The subject tree is a silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*) measuring 85.5 cm in diameter. 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 2 Waterbury Drive.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located in the front yard at 2 Waterbury Drive. The subject tree is a silver maple measuring 85.5 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns that the

tree will cause structural damage due to its close proximity to an existing house. The arborist report that accompanied the application identified the tree as being in fair condition.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and maintainable. No evidence was observed nor was evidence provided that the tree is causing or is likely to cause damage to any load-bearing structures, including the foundation of the adjacent home. The tree is situated 2.2 m away from the house. Tree roots are not physically capable of exerting the physical force to crack concrete or asphalt. Tree roots are however, capable of growing into any available cracks that offer water and air. A tree cannot damage a properly-constructed foundation.

As required under *Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a notice of application 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 this tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing the 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*, permit approval must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant 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. 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.

This silver maple tree at 2 Waterbury Drive 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

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SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director, Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the 85.5 cm diameter silver maple tree at the front of 2 Waterbury Drive

Attachment 2 – Arborist Report included with permit application



Rooted Tree Services

A Division of 1562314 Ontario Inc.
(416) 837-1915

ARBORIST REPORT

DATE: 30 October 2014

LOCATION: 2 Waterbury Drive, Etobicoke, in front yard, 2.2m S/house and 3.1m W/driveway.

SPECIES: 85.5cm DBH Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*)

NATURE OF WORK: Request a permit under the Private Tree Bylaw to remove the Silver Maple tree.

CONDITION: The Silver Maple is in fair condition. It has a u-shaped union at approximately 2m with light included bark and slight rot as the union is holding water and organic material (there is a plant growing in the union). The tree splits into 5 stems of relatively equal size at this union. The tree has moderate pruning wounds on the north side of the tree where limbs have been removed to reduce overhang of the house. This pruning has resulting in a slight asymmetrical crown. There are portion of the main stem that appear to have small cracks and peeling bark; however, there is no evidence of rot or structural issues. The stem does not sound hollow. The long-time owner states the tree was previously multi-stemmed lower on the main stem and has since fused together; this may result in weakness of the stem. There is a large structural root growing directly towards the house and underneath the patio stones leading to the house. These patio stones have been shifted as a result of root growth. There is a light growth deficit in the stem on the north side.

REASONS FOR REMOVAL: The property owner is concerned about potential structural damage occurring as a result of the tree's roots and crown due to the size of the tree and close proximity to the house.

ARBORIST RECOMMENDATION: The Silver Maple is in fair condition; however, its species, form, and proximity to the house are a concern, as Silver Maples are known to fail and the tree has a weak 5-stem union. Although the tree does not appear to be an imminent hazard, it is recommended for removal as potential injury and damage caused from failure would be great. Also, as the roots grow, they may cause shifting and pressure changes in the surrounding soil, which may cause damage and instability to the foundation.

PICTURES ATTACHED: 8

REPLACEMENT TREE(S): 35mm Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) and/or other native tree species of large stature (refer to Figure 1 for recommended planting location and location of existing tree).

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Figure 1. Recommended Planting Locations (denoted by a circle)

*rough sketch, not to scale

**existing trees denoted by a star.

