

Sept. 21, 2015

His Worship Mayor John Tory and Members of City Council
100 Queen St. West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

ATTN: Ms. Marilyn Toft, Manager,
Council Secretariat Support

Re: Motion MM8.1: Request to Protect 250-year-old Red Oak at 76 Coral Gable Drive
(moved by Councillor Mammoliti; seconded by Councillor Doucette), to be discussed at the
City Council Meeting on September 30–October 1, 2015

Mayor Tory and Members of Council:

As members of the Toronto-East York Community Preservation Panel, we are writing in support of Councillor Mammoliti and Councillor Doucette's motion, **MM8.1**, that the Heritage red oak at 76 Coral Gable Drive be preserved by the city using whatever means may be at its disposal, and we call on the City of Toronto to immediately institute stronger means of protecting significant and heritage trees.

Our panel works to preserve and educate Torontonians about the four pillars of heritage as defined by Heritage Toronto: cultural, architectural, archaeological, and natural. Many Torontonians take for granted our beautiful green spaces, which add as much as historic properties do to the value of our neighbourhoods, in addition to supporting the health and well-being of our citizens.

This applies also to our tree canopy, which has suffered significant losses recently due to climate change, invasive species, and development. Toronto's Urban Forestry Department staff work hard to maintain our street and park trees, but are limited in what they can do to prevent the loss of private trees.

In many in-demand neighbourhoods, our oldest and largest trees are coming down as age, poor maintenance, and the stresses of city life take their toll. Due to current methods of excavation, problems with soil compaction, and frequent infrastructure disturbances, their replacements are unlikely to ever grow to the size of these venerable 250–350-year-old living "biological monuments."

For these reasons, we feel strongly that our existing stock of old-growth trees needs to be protected. The Heritage Tree program has designated this red oak, but such a designation affords no real protection. The sale of the property puts this significant specimen at risk, and if we lose it and others like it, none of us will live to see anything like them in the city again. Let's do what we can to protect these icons of our natural heritage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Pancheta Barnett,
Acting Chair, Toronto-East York Community Preservation Panel