



**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

15 Luscombe Lane – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	March 12, 2015
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 27 – Toronto Centre -Rosedale
Reference Number:	P:\2015\Cluster A\PFR\TE05-041415-AFS#20915

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) private tree located at the rear of 15 Luscombe Lane. The application indicates the reason for the removal is the tree's poor location.

The subject tree is a littleleaf linden (*Tilia cordata*) measuring 37 cm in diameter. The tree is healthy and in good condition. Urban Forestry does not support the 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 a private littleleaf linden tree, located at the rear of 15 Luscombe Lane.

Financial Impact

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

COMMENTS

An application was received from the agent for the property owner of 15 Luscombe Lane for a permit to remove a private littleleaf linden tree, measuring 37 cm in diameter, situated at the rear of the property. The application states the reason for tree removal is the tree's poor location. The Arborist Report which accompanied the application

indicates the overall health of the tree is fair; however, the tree is growing in close proximity to the house providing access for rodents into the house and attic. The Arborist Report further states that a cavity is developing at an old pruning wound on the trunk of the tree, but that the wound wood surrounding the cavity is well formed. The Report notes the crown of the tree is unbalanced as a result of its close proximity to the house. Finally, the report claims that the tree has a lean and that the leaves of the tree are browning due to an inadequate amount of soil volume and access to water.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and confirmed that the overall health of the tree is good. The tree is growing in close proximity to the building, but the tree is not touching the structure. The tree has been pruned to remove all of the branches on the one side of the tree, leaving the tree with approximately half its natural crown. The remaining crown has very little deadwood and is exhibiting good bud formation. A cavity is beginning to form in one of the pruning wounds on the trunk; however, the tree is producing callus tissue around the cavity. This callus formation is referred to as compartmentalization, and is a tree's natural response to injury which limits the progression of decay.

There is no evidence of a significant lean in the tree. Patio stones have been laid up to the base of the tree. The tree would benefit from the removal of the stones in order to allow water and air to percolate to the roots and to provide the tree with more space to grow. Despite the location of the house and the stones, the tree is showing no evidence that its location is harming its health. No evidence has been provided to substantiate the claim that the tree's location is poor. The tree has acclimated to its growing environment and continues to survive well.

As required under *Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a Notice of an application to destroy was posted on the subject property for the minimum required 14 day period, in order to provide the community with an opportunity to make comment. No comments to support or oppose the removal of the tree were received.

A permit to destroy the tree was denied. The applicant is appealing that 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 property owner is proposing to provide cash-in-lieu for one (1) 50 mm caliper large growing native shade tree. However, in this instance it is appropriate to require the provision of five (5) 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. 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. 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. The loss of the tree canopy in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, the Asian longhorned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*), and the emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now, than ever.

The littleleaf linden tree at 15 Luscombe Lane 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

Mark Ventresca, Supervisor Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry Branch,
Tel: 416 392-7390, Fax: 416 392-7277, Email: mventre@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1- Photo of the crown of the 37 cm diameter littleleaf linden tree at the rear of 15 Luscombe Lane

Attachment 2 – Photo of the base of the 37 cm diameter littleleaf linden tree at the rear of 15 Luscombe Lane

37 cm diameter littleleaf linden tree at the rear of 15 Luscombe Lane



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