



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

45 Leuty Avenue – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	August 13, 2015
To:	Toronto and East York Community Council
From:	Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Ward:	Ward 32 – Beaches-East York
Reference Number:	P:\2015\Cluster A\PFR\TE10-090815-AFS#21628

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately owned tree located at 45 Leuty Avenue. The application indicates the reason for removal is to address concerns that the tree is located too close to the south neighbour's house and is lifting the driveway and walkway.

The subject tree is a slippery elm (*Ulmus rubra*) measuring 35 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support the removal of the subject 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 45 Leuty Avenue.

Financial Impact

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

Comments

An application was received from an agent of the property owner of 45 Leuty Avenue for a permit to remove one (1) privately owned slippery elm tree, measuring 35 cm in diameter, situated in the back yard of the property along the boundary between 45 Leuty Avenue and 43 Leuty Avenue. In accordance with the City's Boundary and Neighbour Tree Procedure, the co-owner of the boundary tree has been notified in writing that an application to remove the tree has been received.

The arborist report that accompanied the application states the reason for the requested tree removal is to address concerns that the tree is located too close to the neighbouring house to the south and is lifting the driveway and the walkway. The property owners are also concerned by the potential trip hazard created by the tree roots lifting the walkway pavers.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and structurally sound, with a balanced and upright crown. The walkway can be repaired without requiring removal of the slippery elm tree.

The tree is situated approximately 3 metres from the south-east corner of the dwelling at 45 Leuty Avenue and approximately 3 metres from the north-east corner of the dwelling at 43 Leuty Ave. At the time of the inspection, Urban Forestry staff did not identify any defects that would indicate that this tree is prone to failure.

Roots are not physically capable of exerting force required to lift or crack concrete or asphalt. They are however, capable of growing into any available space that offers water and air. Tree roots cannot damage a properly constructed walkway. However, if proper drainage has not been provided, heaving may occur as a result of freezing and thawing creating space that tree roots may grow into. Roots do not and cannot go where there is no water. Where a walkway has been damaged, repair can be typically be undertaken without requiring tree removal.

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.

The permit to remove this 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*, permit issuance must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. The applicant is proposing to plant one (1) large growing shade 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 existing 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 Long-Horned Beetle, and the Emerald Ash Borer make the preservation of all possible healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The slippery elm tree at 45 Leuty 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

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

SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director of Urban Forestry

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the 35 cm diameter slippery elm tree

Attachment 2 – Photograph of the trunk of the 35 cm diameter slippery elm tree



Attachment 2

