



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

16 Chipstead Road – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	February 1, 2016
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 25 – Don Valley West
Reference Number:	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\NY12-022316-AFS#22387

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 16 Chipstead Road. The owner is requesting removal to improve clearance, facilitate the installation of services, improve aesthetics, and alleviate safety concerns.

The subject tree is a Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens* var. *glauca*) measuring 56 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable.

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 16 Chipstead Road.

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 Colorado blue spruce tree measuring 56 cm in diameter, located in the front yard of 16 Chipstead Road. The request to remove this tree was made to improve clearance between a newly constructed home and the tree, facilitate installation of electrical and gas services to the

new home, improve property aesthetics, and alleviate safety concerns regarding potential for tree failure, intruders, fire, and storms. The arborist report submitted with the application described the tree to be in good condition. The arborist's rationale for removal was that the forward extension of the new house (closer to the tree) would jeopardize the tree's root zone stability and cause the tree's lower branches to be in contact with the new home.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined it is healthy both botanically and structurally. Minor defects observed include minor needle dieback and a co-dominant leader. At the time of inspection Urban Forestry did not identify any defects that would indicate the tree is not healthy and maintainable.

The new foundation is situated approximately 5.2 m from the tree. All construction has taken place outside of the required 3.6 m tree protection zone (TPZ) and no injury to the tree, as defined by the Private Tree By-law has occurred. The crown of the tree is located approximately 1.6 m from the new dwelling. Lower branches can be pruned to improve clearance between the tree and dwelling. Pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices will not have a detrimental impact on the overall health of the tree.

The site plan submitted as part of a minor variance application, heard by the Committee of Adjustment on December 10, 2014, indicated that the tree was to be preserved during and after construction of the new dwelling. The tree was preserved and adequately protected during construction in accordance with the site plan. The application to remove the tree was received by Urban Forestry in August 2015, after construction had begun and after the foundation for the new home was excavated and partially installed. To date, the tree has been adequately protected during construction of the new dwelling.

Typically services can be relocated or installed using tunnelling or directional boring to allow for tree retention when services are installed as part of the construction of a new home. The applicant has not provided information demonstrating that it is not possible to install the required services and retain the tree.

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 14-day period in order to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. One (1) objection was received in response to the application to remove the tree in question.

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*, permit approval must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. It is appropriate for the applicant 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. The loss of trees in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, the Asian longhorned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The Colorado blue spruce at 16 Chipstead Road 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 Colorado blue spruce tree measuring 56 cm in diameter

Attachment 2 – Photograph showing the foundation wall of the new home being constructed approximately 5.2 m at its closest point to the tree.