



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

76 Mulholland Avenue – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	March 14, 2016
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 15 – Eglinton-Lawrence
Reference Number:	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\NY13-040516-AFS#22626

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 76 Mulholland Avenue. The application indicates the reason for removal is due to the tree's slowly deteriorating condition both botanically and structurally.

The subject tree is a Colorado spruce (*Picea pungens*) measuring 42 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 76 Mulholland Avenue.

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 of 76 Mulholland Avenue. The subject tree is a Colorado spruce measuring 42 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns that the tree's health is declining and its structure is being compromised.

The arborist report which accompanied the application indicates that the tree is in fair condition but is showing signs of minor decline.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined it is healthy and in good condition both botanically and structurally. Careful examination of the trunk revealed that the tree was leaning at planting or shortly after. Since that time, the main stem turned upward and has been growing vertically ever since. The 2013 ice storm therefore was not the cause of the lean. The root plate of the tree was also observed to be secure. No evidence has been provided by the applicant or their arborist, nor were any defects observed during inspection by City staff to suggest the tree is unsafe, either due to existing condition or past storm activity. This tree can be expected to live for many years.

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. No comments were received in response to the posting.

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 owner providing satisfactory replacement planting. The applicant is proposing to pay cash-in-lieu for one large caliper tree to be planted on municipal property elsewhere in the city. However in this instance it would be appropriate for the owner to provide five (5) replacement trees to be planted on site.

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, as well as the presence of the Asian long horned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now, than ever.

The Colorado spruce tree at 76 Mulholland 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

Harold Moffatt, Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry
Tel: 416-395-6134, Fax: 416-395-6714, Email: hmoffat@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Jason Doyle
Director, Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the Colorado spruce tree in the front yard of 76 Mulholland Avenue