

37 Summerside Crescent– Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	October 24, 2016
To:	North York Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 24 – Willowdale
Reference Number:	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\NY18-111516-AFS# 23730

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 37 Summerside Crescent. The application indicates the reasons for removal are to address concerns regarding resin exuding from the tree and the potential structural failure of the tree resulting from the proximity of the tree's roots to the driveway and walkway.

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 37 Summerside Crescent.

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 spruce tree measuring 42 cm in diameter, situated in the front yard of 37 Summerside Crescent. The application for tree removal has been made to address concerns regarding resin exuding from the tree and the potential structural failure of the tree resulting from the proximity of the tree's roots to the driveway and walkway.

The arborist report which accompanied the application indicates that the tree is in poor condition and is located too close to an existing driveway and house foundation, 0.4 m and 3.5 m respectively. The report further indicates that the tree lacks anchor roots adjacent to the driveway and is therefore prone to structural failure. However, no evidence supporting a lack of anchor roots was provided in the report. One branch was reported to be weakly attached via an included bark branch union (a point where embedded bark occurs in the fork between a branch and the trunk or co-dominant stems causing weakened wood structure), with resin exuding from the point of attachment.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined it is healthy and maintainable. No evidence was found to support the claim that the tree has compromised root stability or is structurally unsound. There was no indication of root loss from construction or other activity.

The branch attachment with included bark and oozing resin can be addressed through pruning one of the limbs included in the union in accordance with good arboricultural practices and ongoing performance of routine tree maintenance.

A permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing this decision.

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.

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. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is proposing to pay cash-in-lieu for one (1) replacement 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 on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of planting.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. Trees 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 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. Trees 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 that 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, compounded with additional tree loss due to the presence of 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 tree at 37 Summerside Crescent 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 subject tree in the front yard of 37 Summerside Crescent