

**166 Richard Clark Drive – Application to Remove a City Tree**

<b>Date:</b>	October 24, 2016
<b>To:</b>	North York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 9 – York Centre
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\NY18-111516-AFS#23732

**SUMMARY**

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This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) City-owned tree located at 166 Richard Clark Drive. The application indicates the reasons for removal are to address concerns over ice storm damage and sight line obstructions.

The subject tree is a Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) measuring 81 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support removal of this tree as it is healthy and maintainable.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:**

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) City-owned tree located at 166 Richard Clark Drive.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

## COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application to remove one (1) City-owned tree, situated on the road allowance fronting 166 Richard Clark Drive. The subject tree is Siberian elm measuring 81 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns regarding ice storm damage to the tree and sight line obstructions when backing out of the driveway.

The arborist report that accompanied the application assessed the tree to be in poor condition. It indicates the tree was damaged during the 2013 ice storm and broken branches have since been removed. However, no evidence of structural defects were provided in the report to support the claim that the tree's structural integrity has been compromised.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined it is healthy and maintainable. No structural defects were observed at the time of inspection. Lower branches were pruned by Urban Forestry in response to past storm damage. Some pruning scars were observed on the main limbs, but are not negatively impact structural integrity of the tree. The tree is located approximately five (5) metres north of the curb and therefore does not create sight line obstructions that would impact a vehicle backing out of the driveway at 166 Richard Clark Drive.

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

Should City Council approve this request for removal of a City-owned tree, in accordance with *Section 813-10.B of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 813, Trees, Article II*, permit issuance must be conditional upon the owners providing payment of the appraised value of the tree to be removed (\$6,922.00), agreeing to have the tree removed at their expense, as well as providing satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is proposing to plant two (2) replacement trees. However, in this instance, it would be appropriate for the owner to provide the City with the appraised value of the subject tree as well as planting two replacement trees which can be achieved in a combination of planting on site and cash-in-lieu of planting. The owner will also be required to provide a tree planting security deposit to cover the cost of removal, replacement and the cost of maintenance for a period of two years for all trees to be planted on City property.

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 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 per cent. 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 Siberian elm tree at 166 Richard Clark Drive 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 years. Urban Forestry, therefore, does not support removal of this tree.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Jason Doyle  
Director, Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the subject tree in the front yard of 166 Richard Clark Drive