



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

14 Queensgrove Road – Application to Remove a Private Tree

Date:	April 19, 2016
To:	Scarborough Community Council
From:	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Ward:	Ward 36 – Scarborough Southwest
Reference Number:	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\SC14-051016-AFS#22794

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 14 Queensgrove Road. The application indicates that reasons for removal are because the tree is in decline, falling branches are a hazard and that the owner finds the maintenance of the tree too onerous.

The subject tree is a white spruce tree (*Picea glauca*), measuring 59 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support the 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 14 Queensgrove 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 tree, situated at the back of the property at 14 Queensgrove Road. The subject tree is a white spruce tree measuring 59 cm in diameter. The arborist report that accompanied the application

states the reason for the requested tree removal is that the tree is in decline and that falling branches are a hazard. Several factors contributing to the tree's decline are cited in the arborist report including a moderate amount of medium diameter deadwood in the crown, co-dominant stems, white oozing sap on the trunk, a minor amount of browning needles, and bark shedding off several medium-diameter branches. After the application was denied the homeowner expressed concern with their ability to maintain this tree due to their age and health.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and structurally sound. The minor amount of deadwood and the co-dominant stems did not pose structural issues that would justify the tree to be deemed in poor condition. No white oozing sap on the trunk, browning of needles, or bark shedding was observed. The tree was found to be a medium-sized specimen in good health and any risk of falling branches can be addressed through routine inspection and maintenance in accordance with good arboricultural practices.

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 provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the property owner 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 attributable 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. The loss of 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 white spruce tree at 14 Queensgrove 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 of Urban Forestry
Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Photograph of the white spruce tree, measuring 59 cm in diameter
Attachment 2 – Photograph showing the relative distance of the tree from the house



