

Application to Remove a Private Tree - 5 Royal Doulton Drive

Date: December 1, 2016

To: North York Community Council

From: Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Wards: Ward 34 – Don Valley East

SUMMARY

This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 5 Royal Doulton Drive. The application indicates the reason for removal is to address concerns regarding the potential for future structural issues with some branches as the tree grows larger. Follow up communication with the property owner also identified concerns regarding damage from dripping sap in spring and branches growing over electrical lines.

The subject tree is a red maple (*Acer rubrum*) measuring 48 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 5 Royal Doulton Drive.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

DECISION HISTORY

There is no decision history regarding this tree removal permit application.

COMMENTS

Urban Forestry received an application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located in the front yard of 5 Royal Doulton Drive. The subject tree is a red maple measuring 48 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns regarding the potential for future structural issues with some branches as the tree grows larger. In follow up communications, the property owner also identified concerns over branches growing over electrical lines and dripping sap in the spring season. The property owner has indicated that sap dripping from branches overhanging the driveway and adjacent house have damaged vehicles and the roof of the home.

The arborist report which accompanied the application indicates the tree is in good condition. The report also indicates the subject tree has some branches which are exhibiting what appears to be early symptoms of poor structure. Currently, this is not impacting the tree's structural integrity, but may become a liability in the future when the tree is larger. No evidence has been provided in the arborist report or otherwise, to confirm that the tree drips sap during the spring season.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and maintainable both botanically and structurally. No structural defects or decay was observed on any of the major limbs or main trunk. Two lower branches were observed to have an atypical shape. This irregularity, however, is not negatively impacting the current structural integrity of the tree or presenting a future risk. The branches growing over electrical lines can be addressed by pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices.

The dripping substance that was identified as a concern is more likely to be honeydew than tree sap. Honeydew is a sticky liquid produced by aphids that drips from the leaves and branches. Neither aphids, nor honeydew cause tree damage. Dripping sap or honeydew was not observed at time of inspection, however, the perceived nuisance from dripping sap or honeydew is not a reason to remove a healthy tree. There are specific management practices available to address aphids and the honeydew they produce.

When reviewing applications for tree removal, Urban Forestry staff are guided by City policies and bylaws including the *City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees Article III*, more commonly referred to as the Private Tree By-law. The Private Tree By-law does not have a mechanism that would allow the removal of the subject tree based on the concerns stated in the tree removal permit application.

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 issuance must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is proposing to plant one (1) replacement tree. However, in this instance it would be appropriate for the applicant 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. 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. 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 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 red maple tree at 5 Royal Doulton 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 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 5 Royal Doulton Drive
Attachment 2 – Photograph of the subject tree in the front yard of 5 Royal Doulton Drive
– lower branches

Attachment 1- Photograph of the subject tree in the front yard of 5 Royal Doulton Drive



Attachment 2 – Photograph of the subject tree in the front yard of 5 Royal Doulton Drive – lower branches

