

## **Application to Remove a Private Tree - 231 Lonsmount Drive**

**Date:** November 23, 2018

**To:** Toronto and East York Community Council

**From:** Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

**Wards:** Ward 12 - Toronto-St. Paul's

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 231 Lonsmount Drive. The application states that the area around the tree has been landscaped. The applicant has indicated that this may result in a decline in the health of the tree and requests a permit for removal.

The subject tree is a sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), measuring 51 cm in diameter. The Tree By-law does not support the 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) privately-owned tree located at 231 Lonsmount Drive.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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

### **DECISION HISTORY**

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

## COMMENTS

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Urban Forestry received an application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located in the rear yard of 231 Lonsmount Drive. The subject tree is a sugar maple measuring 51 cm in diameter. There has been some recent landscaping in the rear yard including re-grading near the base of the tree. The arborist retained by the owner is concerned that the tree may decline as a result of the landscaping work and a permit to remove the tree has been requested. The arborist assessed the tree to be in fair to good condition.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and maintainable both botanically and structurally. Any impact to the health of the tree as a result of the recent landscaping cannot be determined at this time. The condition of the tree should be monitored over the next few growing seasons and if its health declines the applicant should contact Urban Forestry to discuss maintenance options.

When reviewing applications for tree removal, Urban Forestry staff are guided by City policies and by-laws 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 a minimum of 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 through a combination of onsite planting and cash-in-lieu of planting.

Trees improve quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They help to 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 sugar maple tree at 231 Lonsmount 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 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**

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Attachment 1 - Photograph of the sugar maple tree measuring 51 cm in diameter



Attachment 1 - Photograph of the sugar maple tree measuring 51 cm in diameter

