

## **Application to Remove a City-Owned Tree – 143 Plewes Road**

**Date:** May 14, 2020

**To:** North York Community Council

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

**Wards:** Ward 6 – York Centre

### **SUMMARY**

---

This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove a City-owned tree located at 143 Plewes Road. The application indicates the reason for removal is accommodate a new driveway entrance within the City-owned right-of-way resulting from recent Committee of Adjustment approvals to construct a new detached dwelling with an attached garage.

The subject tree is a Freeman maple (*Acer x freemanii*), measuring 21 cm in diameter. The Tree By-law 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 a City-owned tree located at 143 Plewes Road.

### **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 a City-owned tree located on the City-owned right-of-way adjacent to 143 Plewes Road. The subject tree is a Freeman maple measuring 21 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has

been made to accommodate the applicant's preferred driveway location and configuration resulting from recent Committee of Adjustment (COA) approvals to construct a new detached dwelling with an attached garage.

Urban Forestry reviewed the minor variance application submitted to the COA and provided comments advising that regardless of COA approval, an application to injure and/or remove a City-owned tree may be denied by Urban Forestry. Urban Forestry advised the applicant that the tree could be preserved if the proposed driveway width were reduced and the tree protection zone of 1.8 metres was maintained.

The arborist report that accompanied the application describes the tree to be in good condition. Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and, at the time of inspection, determined that it is healthy and maintainable, both botanically and structurally.

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, Article II*, more commonly referred to as the Tree By-law. The 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.

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

Should City Council approve this request for permission to remove this 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 trees to be removed (\$920.00), agreeing to have the tree removed at their expense, as well as providing satisfactory replacement planting. In this instance, it would be appropriate for the owner to provide five replacement trees for each tree being removed 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 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 Freeman maple tree at 143 Plewes 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. In accordance with the City Council-approved Strategic Forest Management Plan, Toronto's Official Plan and the Tree By-law, this tree should not be removed.

## **CONTACT**

---

David Bostock, Supervisor, Tree Protection and Plan Review, Urban Forestry  
Tel: 416-395-6134, Email: [David.Bostock@toronto.ca](mailto:David.Bostock@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

---

Jason Doyle  
Director, Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

---

Attachment 1 - Figure 1: Staff photograph showing Freeman maple located adjacent 143 Plewes Road dated October 5, 2019. The proposed new driveway location would be to the right of the tree. The yellow-clad guy wire has since been removed.

Attachment 1 - Figure 1: Staff photograph showing Freeman maple located adjacent 143 Plewes Road dated October 5, 2019. The proposed new driveway location would be to the right of the tree. The yellow-clad guy wire has since been removed.

