

# Application to Remove a Private Ravine Protected Tree – 17 Langmuir Crescent

**Date:** January 27, 2021

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

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

**Wards:** Ward 4 – Parkdale-High Park

## SUMMARY

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This report requests that City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one privately owned ravine tree located at 17 Langmuir Crescent. The application indicates the reason for removal is that the tree drops large quantities of nuts making the rear yard unusable.

The subject tree is a black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), measuring 97 cm in diameter. The Ravine and Natural Feature Protection 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 privately owned ravine-protected tree located at 17 Langmuir Crescent.

## 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 privately owned ravine-protected tree located in the rear yard of 17 Langmuir Crescent. The subject tree is a black walnut measuring 97 cm in diameter. The application indicates that the request to remove this tree has been made to address concerns over falling nuts, making the rear yard unusable.

The arborist report that accompanied the application describes the tree to be in fair to good condition.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and at the time of inspection determined that it is healthy and maintainable. Staff through this review have concluded that removal of the subject tree is not permissible under the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law.

Many of the tree species that grow in Toronto's urban forest produce fruit that some residents consider a nuisance. Every large growing tree has some degree of maintenance associated with it including removal of leaves, flowers, fruit, twigs and small branches. The benefits that trees afford to a community far outweigh the maintenance inconvenience associated with falling debris.

As a result of the above-noted findings and in support of protecting and growing the City's urban forest, a permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The applicant is appealing this decision.

Should City Council approve this request for tree removal, in accordance with *Section 658-6 of City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 658, Ravine and Natural Feature Protection*, permit approval must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is proposing to plant one replacement tree. Urban Forestry recommends that if City Council approve this request for removal, the applicant provide five replacement trees which can be achieved in a combination of on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of planting. The applicant will also be required to provide a tree planting security deposit for the implementation of the approved Replanting Plan for trees planted within the Ravine-Protected Area.

The black walnut tree at 17 Langmuir Crescent is a valuable part of the urban forest that provides numerous aesthetic, social and economic benefits to the property owner and local community. A higher density of trees in a neighborhood has been shown to significantly improve physical and mental health, such as reducing blood pressure and stress levels and promoting physical activity. Trees make urban environments aesthetically more pleasing which in turn, also raises property values.

Toronto's urban forest provides \$55 million in environmental benefits every year including improved air quality through pollution removal and lower storm water management costs by reducing runoff. This tree, located within the City's ravine system, is especially valuable as ravines are some of the last refuges for native plants and wildlife that once populated the entire city. Their relatively natural state is what makes them so important for biodiversity and other ecosystem functions.

Trees and greenspaces also play an important role in mitigating impacts and risks from climate change. In Toronto, ravines are some of our largest carbon sinks and help to moderate local temperatures.

Protecting the urban forest is a key strategy for building resiliency, as it continues to face increasing natural pressures such as storms and invasive pests. The 2013 ice storm resulted in the removal of over 3000 City-owned trees. The Emerald Ash Borer beetle has killed approximately 860,000 ash trees across the City. As a result, if the City

aims to reach its canopy target of 40 per cent it is imperative that the City protect healthy trees from injury and removal whenever possible. The improved condition and size of the urban forest will support the City of Toronto's goals to improve quality of life and well-being that enables a diverse, sustainable, innovative, growing and thriving city.

In accordance with the City Council-approved Strategic Forest Management Plan, Toronto's Official Plan, Toronto's Biodiversity Strategy, Ravine Strategy, and the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law, the black walnut at 17 Langmuir Crescent, as a valuable part of the urban forest, should not be removed.

## **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 – Figure 1: Photograph showing the canopy of the subject tree at 17 Langmuir Crescent, September 23, 2020.

Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Photograph showing base of the subject tree at 17 Langmuir Crescent, September 23, 2020.

Attachment 1 – Figure 1: Photograph showing the canopy of the subject tree at 17 Langmuir Crescent, September 23, 2020.





Attachment 2 – Figure 2: Photograph showing base of the subject tree at 17 Langmuir Crescent, September 23, 2020

